Being John Malkovich

a screenplay by

Charlie Kaufman

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1 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS (MONTAGE) - DAY 1

The montage plays under the opening credits. It feels real, shot from a distance with a telephoto lens.

We watch Craig, 30 years old and small, in various locations, at various times of day, and in several different changes of clothes, attempting to earn money as a street puppeteer. His act consists of following passers-by and imitating their mannerisms and gaits with his marionette (a delicately crafted miniature version of himself). Craig is amazingly skilled, his puppet's impersonations are letter perfect. But the people he's imitating either ignore his efforts, hurry to get past, or yell at him to leave them alone. His change cup remains empty. The last shot in the sequence is of Craig at night, heading down into a subway entrance, his marionette slung dejectedly over his shoulder.

FADE TO BLACK:

A rooster crows.

CUT TO:

2 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S BEDROOM - MORNING 2

Craig jolts awake in bed. A rooster stands on his chest, crowing. Lotte, 30, in the middle of dressing for work, hurries in and pulls the bird from Craig's chest.

LOTTE
Sorry, hon. I didn't know Orrin Hatch was out of his pen. Good morning.

Lotte leans down and kisses Craig on the forehead.

CRAIG
Morning.

LOTTE
Gotta run, sorry. Shipment of grub worms coming in first thing.

CRAIG
Enjoy.

LOTTE
Craig, listen, honey, I've been thinking... maybe you'd feel better if you got, you know, a job or something.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

CRAIG
We've been over this. Nobody's looking for a puppeteer in today's wintry economic climate.

LOTTE
Well, you know, maybe something else until this whole puppet thing turns around.

CRAIG
(bitterly)
The Great Mantini doesn't need a day job.

LOTTE
(sighs)
Craig, everyone can't be Derek Mantini.
(beat)
Well, grub worms are waiting. Do me a favor?

CRAIG
What?

LOTTE
Would you check in on Elijah? He seems to be a little under the weather this morning.

CRAIG
Which one is Elijah again?

LOTTE
The monkey.

CRAIG
Yeah. Okay.

CUT TO:

3 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S GARAGE - MORNING 3

The place is a mess. Vivaldi blasts through cheap speakers. A small marionette stage stands in the back of the garage. The stage is lit and on it is the "Craig" puppet pacing back and forth, wringing its hands with incredible subtlety. We see Craig, above and behind the stage. He is manipulating the puppet. His fingers move fast and furious. The puppet breaks into a dance, a beautiful and intricate balletic piece. Soon the puppet is leaping and tumbling through space, moves that one would think impossible for a marionette. Sweat appears on the real Craig's brow. His

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 3

fingers move like lightning. The puppet moves faster and faster. Sweat appears on the puppet's brow. We see that the sweat is being pumped from a special device that the real Craig controls. The Craig puppet collapses on the floor of the stage. It puts its hands up to its face and weeps. Craig hangs the puppet, and comes down around the front of the stage. He is heaving. He switches off the music, picks up a beer and takes a swig.

CUT TO:

4 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 4

The room is filled with penned and unpenned animals of all kinds: snakes, lizards, birds, a dog, cats, etc. Craig sits on the couch flipping through the paper. He turns to the want ads. The TV is on in the background. Elijah, the monkey, sits next to Craig holding his stomach and moaning weakly. On the TV, Derek Mantini is working a 60 foot high marionette from the top of a water tower. The assembled crowd is enthralled.

TV ANNOUNCER
The crowd is enthralled as Derek Mantini, arguably the greatest puppeteer in the history of the world, performs "The Belle of Amherst" with his 60 foot Emily Dickinson puppet, directed by the inimitable Charles Nelson Reilly.

Charles Nelson Reilly floats by in a hot air balloon.

CHARLES NELSON REILLY
Beautiful, beautiful! Nyong-nyong.

CRAIG
Gimmicky bastard.

Elijah moans. Craig looks at him.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
You don't know how lucky you are being a monkey. If I were a monkey, I'd be the happiest man alive. Nobody expecting anything of me. Just sit on a couch and moan all day. That's the life.

Elijah glances up at Craig, quizzically. Craig tries to stare him down, gives up.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DUSK 5

Craig walks behind a guy with his marionette, imitating him. The guy turns suddenly, and slugs Craig.

CUT TO:

6 INT. PET STORE - EVENING 6

Lotte, in a smock, is in the back feeding fish. The door bell jingles as someone enters the shop. Lotte looks up. It's Craig. His lip is swollen and his nose is bloody. He drags his puppet behind him. The puppet's head is partially crushed. Lotte gasps and runs over to Craig.

LOTTE
Oh, sweetheart, not again! Oh, sweetie. Are you okay?

Craig shrugs. Lotte hugs him.

LOTTE (CONT'D)
Craiggy, why are you doing this to yourself?

CRAIG
(through fat lip)
I uh puppeteeh.

Lotte looks at him, her eyes brimming with tears.

CUT TO:

7 INT. GARAGE - MORNING 7

Craig sits at his workbench, holding the now detached crushed puppet head. He stares at it, his repair tools at the ready. He sighs, and puts the head in a drawer.

CUT TO:

8 INT. KITCHEN - MORNING 8

Close-up of a newspaper opening. We pull back to see Craig at the kitchen table looking at the job classifieds. He checks under "Puppeteers." Nothing. A boxed ad with the bold-type heading "Looking for a man with fast hands" catches Craig's eye. He reads the ad: "short-statured file clerk with unusually nimble and dexterous fingers needed for speed filing. EOE." Craig writes down the address.

9 EXT. MERTIN-FLEMMER BUILDING - DAY 9

Craig, in a sports coat and tie, walks down 11th Avenue, checking addresses.

CUT TO:

10 INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY 10

Craig studies the business listings board. He finds LesterCorp, and sees that it is located on floor 7 1/2. Craig presses the elevator button and waits. Another man comes and waits next to him. The doors open, and Craig and the other man get in.

CUT TO:

11 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS 11

The other man presses "9." Craig studies the buttons. There is no "7 1/2."

MAN #1
Seven and a half, right?

CRAIG
Uh, yeah.

MAN #1
I'll take you through it.

The man picks up a crowbar leaning in the corner. He watches the floor numbers light up in succession. After "7" and before "8", the man hits the emergency stop button. The elevator slams to a halt. The man pries open the doors with the crowbar. Revealed is a standard office building hallway, except that from floor to ceiling it is only about four feet high. Everything is scaled down accordingly. The number on the the wall across from the elevator is 7 1/2

MAN #1
Seven and a half.

CRAIG
Thank you.

Craig climbs out onto the 7 1/2 floor.

CUT TO:

12 INT. SEVEN AND A HALF FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 12

Craig, hunched-over, makes his way down the hallway looking for LesterCorp. He passes a hunched-over man walking in the other direction. They nod to each other. Craig finds a door marked "LesterCorp - Meeting America's Filing Needs Since 1922." He enters.

CUT TO:

13 INT. LESTERCORP RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS 13

All furniture is scaled down to fit into this low-ceilinged space. A few other short men sit reading tiny magazines. Craig approaches Floris, the receptionist.

FLORIS
Welcome to LesterCorp. May we meet your filing needs?

CRAIG
No, uh, my name is Craig Schwartz. I have an interview with Mr. Lester.

FLORIS
Please have a seat, Mr. Juarez...

CRAIG
Schwartz.

FLORIS
Pardon?

CRAIG
Schwartz.

FLORIS
I'm sorry, I'm afraid I have no idea what you're saying right now.

CRAIG
My name is Schwartz.

FLORIS
Money, Miss Warts?

CRAIG
Forget it.

Craig takes a seat next to the other applicants.

13 CONTINUED: 13

FLORIS
(calling across the room)
Fork ah did?

The intercom buzzes. Floris picks it up.

FLORIS
(to Craig)
Mr. Juarez?

CRAIG
Yes?

FLORIS
Yex?

CRAIG
I said "yes."

FLORIS
You suggest *what*? I have no time for piddling suggestions from mumbling job applicants, my good man. Besides, Dr. Lester will see you now. I think that's what he said.

Craig stands, opens Lester's door, and enters.

CUT TO:

14 INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 14

Craig enters. Lester, a giant of an old man, sits hunched in his tiny chair.

LESTER
Come in, Mr. Juarez. I'd stand, but, well, you know.

CRAIG
(extending his hand)
Actually, my name is Craig Schwartz, Dr. Lester.

Lester flips an intercom switch.

LESTER
Security.

CRAIG
No, it's okay, sir. Just a mix-up with your secretary.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 14

LESTER
She's not my secretary. She's what they call an executive liaison, and I'm not banging her, if that's what you're implying.

CRAIG
Not at all, Dr. Lester. I simply misspoke.

LESTER
Tell me, Dr. Schwartz, what do you feel you can bring to LesterCorp?

CRAIG
Well, sir, I'm an excellent filer.

LESTER
(crafty)
You think so, eh? Which comes first, L or... Glooph?

CRAIG
Glooph is not a letter, sir.

LESTER
Damn, you *are* good. I tried to trick you. Okay, put these in order.

Lester hands Craig a bunch of index cards. Craig orders them with amazing speed and dexterity. Lester watches, eyes wide.

LESTER (CONT'D)
(flips intercom switch)
Floris, get Guinness on the phone.

FLORIS (O.S.)
Genghis Khan Capone?

LESTER
Forget it.

FLORIS (O.S.)
Fork ah did?

LESTER
(flips off switch)
Fine woman, Floris. I don't know how she puts up with this damn speech impediment of mine.

14 CONTINUED: (2) 14

CRAIG
You don't have a speech impediment, Dr. Lester.

LESTER
Flattery will get you everywhere, my boy. But I'm afraid I have to trust Floris on this one. You see, she has her doctorate in speech impedimentology from Case Western. Perhaps you've read her memoirs, "I Can't Understand A Word Any Of You Are Saying."

CRAIG
No.

LESTER
Pity, it tells it like it is. That's why the eastern, read Jewish, publishing establishment won't touch it. That's a quote from the book jacket. George Will, I think.
(beat)
I apologize if you can't understand a word I'm saying, Dr. Schwartz.

CRAIG
No. I understand perfectly.

LESTER
(choking up)
Thank you for being kind enough to lie. You see, I've been very lonely in my isolated tower of indecipherable speech. You're hired. Any questions?

CRAIG
Just one. Why is this floor so short?

LESTER
Low overhead, m'boy. We pass the savings on to you.
(laughs heartily)
But seriously, that's all covered in orientation.

CUT TO:

15 INT. ORIENTATION ROOM - DAY 15

It's a small screening room with red velvet seats. There are a few people scattered about the squat theater. Craig is

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

among them. He looks around the room and his eyes rest momentarily on Maxine. She is in her late 20's with close cropped black hair. Her eyes are opaque, her face expressionless, her countenance trance-like. She glances over at Craig, then turns back to the screen. The lights dim. A projector whirs and the screen is illuminated.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY 16

We tilt up the building.

MUSIC: Perky Industrial Film Music.

TITLE: The 7 1/2 Floor

NARRATOR (O.S.)
Welcome to the 7 1/2 floor of the Mertin-Flemmer building. As you will now be spending your work day here, it is important that you learn a bit about the history of this famous floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

17 INT. 7 1/2 FLOOR - DAY 17

Don and Wendy, two office workers, crouch in the hall and chat. Both hold cups of coffee.

WENDY
Hello, Don.

DON
Hello, Wendy.

WENDY
Don, I was wondering, do you know why our workplace has such low ceilings?

DON
It's an interesting story, Wendy. Many years ago in the late 1800's, James Mertin, an Irish ship captain looking to invest in the future of our great country, came to this town and decided to erect an office building.

CUT TO:

18 OLD FOOTAGE OF CONSTRUCTION CREW WORKING. 18

DON (CONT'D) (V.O.)
He would call this building the Mertin-Flemmer Building, after himself and someone else, who, local legend has it, was named Flemmer.

CUT TO:

19 INT. 19TH CENTURY OFFICE - DAY 19

An actor playing Mertin sits at a desk and writes with a quill. He appears very stern and has mutton chop sideburns.

DON (CONT'D) (V.O.)
One day, Captain Mertin received an unexpected visitor.

There is a knock at the door.

MERTIN
Enter ye, if ye dare enter.

A tiny woman enters.

TINY WOMAN
Captain Mertin?

MERTIN
What want ye, girl child?

TINY WOMAN
I am not a child, Captain Mertin, but rather an adult lady of miniature proportions.

MERTIN
(taken aback)
I see. Well, it is not my fault that thou art tiny. So if it is charity yer after, then be gone with ye, ye foul demon.

TINY WOMAN
I am not asking for alms, but rather the ear of a kind man with a noble heart.

MERTIN
(sighs)
Aye. Speak then if ye must.

19 CONTINUED: 19

TINY WOMAN
Captain Mertin, surely I am a God-fearing Christian woman like yourself, but, alas, I am afraid that the world was not built with me in mind. Door knobs are too high, chairs are unwieldy, high-ceilinged rooms mock my stature. Nor am I a married lady, Captain, after all, who would marry a person of my dimuntiveness? So I am forced to work for my few pennies a week as an optometrist. Why cannot there be a place for me to work safe and comfortable?

Mertin wipes a tear from his eye.

MERTIN
Woman, your story moves me like no other. Me own sister was tiny and then died. Therefore, I shall make ye me wife. And I shall build a floor in my building, between the 7th and 8th, which will be scaled down, so from now on there shall be at least one place on God's green Earth that you and your accursed kind can live in peace...

DISSOLVE TO:

20 INT. HALLWAY 7 1/2 FLOOR - DAY 20

Don And Wendy crouch and talk.

DON
So that's the story of 7 1/2. Since the rents are considerably lower, this floor has been adopted by businesses which for one reason or another are forced to cut corners. After all... the overhead is low! Ha ha ha!

WENDY
Ha ha ha!

TITLE: The End

CUT TO:

21 INT. ORIENTATION ROOM - DAY 21

The screen goes dark. The lights go up. Craig looks over at Maxine. She stands and walks past him.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

CRAIG
Moving story.

MAXINE
Yes. Unfortunately it's bullshit. The real story of 7 1/2 is so evil that it could never be revealed to Americans raised on sitcoms and happy news anchors.

CRAIG
Is that true?

MAXINE
Well, truth is for suckers, isn't it?.

CRAIG
Listen, I'm Craig Schwartz, just starting out at LesterCorp. Where are you just starting out?

MAXINE
How dreary - to be - Somebody / How public - like a Frog / To tell one's name - the livelong June / To an admiring Bog!

CRAIG
(proudly)
Emily Dickinson.

MAXINE
I wouldn't know.

Maxine walks away.

CUT TO:

22 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 22

Lotte chops onions. A parrot sits on her head. Craig stirs a pot on the stove. A monkey leaps from the top of the cabinet to the top of the refrigerator to the kitchen table. A dog watches the monkey and barks at it.

PARROT
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!

CRAIG
Shut up!

22 CONTINUED: 22

LOTTE
(to Craig)
Sorry, honey.

The dog continues to bark.

PARROT
Sorry honey. Sorry honey.

An offscreen neighbor pounds the wall.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
Shut up!

LOTTE
(yelling)
Sorry!

Lotte grabs the parrot off her head and leaves the room.

PARROT (O.S.)
Help! She's locking me in a cage!

Lotte reenters.

LOTTE
Isn't that cute? I just taught her that.

CRAIG
Adorable. What time are they supposed to be here?

LOTTE
Seven-ish.

CRAIG
We have to make it an early night.

LOTTE
They'll understand. Besides I've got a morning appointment tomorrow with Elijah's shrink. We're getting to the bottom of this acid stomach.

CRAIG
(not paying attention)
Hmmm.

LOTTE
Some sort of childhood trauma, she thinks. Possible feelings of inadequacy as a chimp. Interesting, huh?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2) 22

CRAIG
Hmmm.

LOTTE
(beat)
So, honey, have you thought any more about having a baby?

CRAIG
You know, it's so tough right now. Economically and all. We'll see if the job thing pays off.

Lotte nods halfheartedly. The doorbell rings. The dog barks. The parrot screams. The neighbor pounds on the wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

23 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT 23

The dining room table is set up. Craig and Lotte and their friends Peter and Gloria are seated and eating dinner. There is an obvious lull in the conversation.

PETER
Good food, Lotte.

LOTTE
Thanks. Craig helped, too, by the way.

PETER
Vegetarian, right?

LOTTE
Yes. All vegetable, all the time.

PETER
Amazing.

There is another lull. Everyone eats.

PETER (CONT'D)
No kidding about that 7 1/2 floor. Craig?

CRAIG
No kidding, Peter.

GLORIA
That's great. It almost sounds like make-believe.
(beat)
Like a storybook.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 23

GLORIA (cont'd)
(beat)
like a fairy tale.
(beat)
It's really great.
(beat)
So Lotte, when you say all vegetable, do you mean all vegetable *entirely*?

CUT TO:

24 INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT 24

Gloria and Peter are riding in silence.

GLORIA
Lotte told me that Eskimos have a lot of words for snow.

PETER
How many?

GLORIA
Ten, I think.

PETER
I wonder why so many.

GLORIA
Because they have a lot of snow. Isn't that interesting?

CUT TO:

25 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 25

Craig washes the dishes. Lotte dries them. They don't look at each other.

CUT TO:

26 INT. LESTERCORP FILE ROOM - MORNING 26

Craig, in a cream colored suit, pours over the file cabinets. Floris watches from the doorway.

FLORIS
You're good.

Craig turns.

26 CONTINUED: 26

CRAIG
(over-enunciating)
Thank you, Floris.

Floris shrugs, shakes her head.

FLORIS
You're not like the other boys we've had here. Granted, I can't understand what you're saying either, but your soft palette resonates tremendously well and you never ever constrict your epiglottis.

CRAIG
I *am* a trained performer.

FLORIS
(swooning)
Music to my ears! Whatever you said. Speak, speak, speak, my magnificent friend, speak!

CUT TO:

27 INT. HALLWAY 7 1/2 FLOOR - DAY 27

Craig pours himself a cup of coffee. Maxine approaches with an empty cup.

CRAIG
Hello again.

Craig fills her cup.

MAXINE
Yes, well...

CRAIG
You know, I've been thinking about what *you* said yesterday, about the orientation film being a cover-up. I think you're on to something.

MAXINE
And fifty *other* lines to get into a girl's pants.

CRAIG
No, really.

27 CONTINUED: 27

MAXINE
You know, if you ever got me, you wouldn't have a clue what to do with me. That's the thing, Romeo.

Maxine walks away.

CUT TO:

28 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S GARAGE - NIGHT 28

Craig is at his workbench, painting the finishing touches on a new puppet. It is beautiful. It is Maxine. Lotte watches quietly from the door. A Lotte puppet hangs from a hook, tangled and dusty.

LOTTE
New puppet?

Craig is surprised, caught.

CRAIG
Yeah, just an idea I had.

LOTTE
She's very beautiful.

CRAIG
(shrugging)
Just an idea I had.

Craig hangs the puppet, stands, and switches off the light.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
C'mon, let's go to bed.

CUT TO:

29 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 29

The room is dark. Lotte snores lightly. Craig lies there with his eyes open. Quietly, he gets up and leaves the bedroom. Lotte watches him go.

CUT TO:

30 INT. GARAGE - NIGHT 30

Craig stands above the puppet stage. He is working both the Craig puppet and the Maxine puppet at the same time. The two perform a beautiful and graceful *pas de deux*. They finish in a passionate embrace.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 30

CRAIG
(quietly)
I would *too* know what to do with you.

CUT TO:

31 INT. FILE ROOM - MORNING 31

Craig files. Floris watches him from the doorway. Dr. Lester watches Floris from behind a cabinet.

FLORIS
Oh, what magic those fingers could work on the right "cabinet."
(strokes Craig's neck)
Alphabetize *me*, baby. And don't forget, *I* comes before *U*.

Floris laughs long and hard. Too long and too hard.

CRAIG
Floris, you're very nice, but I'm afraid I'm in love with somebody else.

FLORIS
(upset)
I'm afraid I... have no idea what you are saying... you bastard!

Floris runs from the room. Lester pokes his head out from behind the cabinet.

LESTER
Don't toy with Floris, Schwartz. Why, if I were eighty years younger, I'd box your ears.

CRAIG
I wasn't toying with her, sir. I was just... How old *are* you?

LESTER
One hundred and five. Carrot juice.
(beat)
Lot's of it. I swear, it's almost not worth it. I piss orange. Oh, and I have to piss sitting down... like a goddamn *girly... every fifteen minutes*. But nobody wants to die, Schwartz.

32 CONTINUED: 32

CRAIG
(into phone)
I won't be late, Lot. I just have to listen to Lester's sexual fantasies and drink carrot juice for a little while. It's a job thing.

Maxine walks by. Craig grabs her arm, signals for her to wait a minute. She waits.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I gotta go back to work. Yeah, okay. You too. Okay. Bye.

Craig hangs up.

MAXINE
What?

CRAIG
I just wanted to say "hi." Did you know I still don't know your name or where you work?

MAXINE
Yeah.

CRAIG
How about this, if I can guess your first name within three tries, you have to come out for a drink with me tonight.

MAXINE
Why not?

CRAIG
Great.
(watches her face as he guesses)
Buuuhhppaahhhhnnn.....Muhhhahhhhh....Mahh hnnnaaa..nollltuuukkkaaaaralllll...tashab arbarasssssuuuuusaaaaaaannnnnnnaaaaaannn nnnnnccccccceeeeeee...Mwaaaaaa....Mahhhhhk kkkk...ssssseeeeeen. Maxine?

MAXINE
Who told you?

CRAIG
I'm right?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2) 32

MAXINE
Who told you?

CRAIG
That's incredible! Nobody told me! I swear! It's kismet. Maxine! It's a beautiful name. There's a psychic connection. Don't you see? It was meant to be! Maxine! Maxine! Maxine! I will shout it from the rooftops!

MAXINE
Somebody told you.

CRAIG
Oh, Maxine, nobody told me, Maxine, Maxine. It just came out of me like a song, Maxine. A beautiful crazy, song, Maxine. Maxine. Maxine!

MAXINE
I am dubious, but I don't welsh. Meet me at The Stuck Pig. Seven o'clock. You're late, I walk. So help me, if I find out *you cheated.*

CRAIG
(in heaven)
Maxine.

Craig walks down the hall. A tiny smile flits across Maxine's face.

CUT TO:

33 INT. JUICY JUICE BAR - EVENING 33

Lester and Craig sit at a table. There are several emptied glasses of carrot juice in front of Lester. Craig nurses one glass, and keeps checking his watch.

LESTER
Imagine a room full of women. Nubile, blonde, wet with desire, Schwartz. A harem, if you will. Me in leather. A harness, if you like. I am the object of this desire, and all eyes are on me as I speak. "Ladies," *I begin, "I am the love* god, Eros. I intoxicate you. My spunk is to you manna from heaven...

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

CRAIG
I'll keep that in mind, sir.

LESTER
No sir-e-bob, I don't die. But what I do is get older, wrinkled like a former plum that's become the wrinkled prune you see before you. Oh, to be a young man again, maybe then Floris would care for me.

CRAIG
The elderly have so much to offer, sir. They are our link with history.

LESTER
I don't want to be your goddamn link, damn you. I want to feel Floris' naked thighs against my own. I want to know passion. I want my body to inspire lust in that beautiful, complex woman. I want her to shiver in a spasm of ecstasy when I penetrate her. Oh, God, the agony of the flesh, Schwartz.

CRAIG
Dr. Lester, while I am flattered that you share your feelings with me, I believe perhaps the workplace is not the most suitable environment for this type of discussion.

LESTER
All right. Meet me at the Juicy-Juice Juice Bar after work today and I'll spill my goddamn guts for you.

Lester exits.

CRAIG
Shit.

CUT TO:

32 INT. HALLWAY 7 1/2 FLOOR - DAY 32

Craig squats next to a payphone. As he talks, he watches a small group of really old people, step out of the elevator and head into the LesterCorp office.

33 CONTINUED: 33

CRAIG
(standing)
Dr. Lester, it's been really fascinating, but I'm afraid I have to get home to my wife now.

LESTER
Wife, huh? I'd love to meet her, Craig.

CRAIG
Yessir.

LESTER
Shall we say dinner on Friday.
(afterthought)
You can come too if you like.

CRAIG
(checking watch)
That's sounds fine, sir. Gotta run.

Craig hurries to the door. Lester downs Craig's juice, signals the waiter for more.

CUT TO:

34 INT. THE STUCK PIG - NIGHT 34

Maxine sits at the bar, watching her watch. Craig rushes into the room, frantic, out of breath. He spots Maxine and plops himself next to her.

CRAIG
Made it, Maxine. Maxine, Maxine, Maxine.

MAXINE
Just.

CRAIG
Buy you a drink, Maxine?

MAXINE
You married?

CRAIG
Yeah. But enough about me.

Maxine laughs. The bartender approaches.

CRAIG
What'll you have?

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 34

MAXINE
(to bartender)
The usual, Barry.

CRAIG
(to bartender)
I'll have, like, a beer. Like a Budweiser, or something.

The bartender walks away.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
I like you. I don't know what it is exactly.

MAXINE
My tits?

CRAIG
No, no, it's your energy or your attitude or the way you carry yourself or...

MAXINE
Christ, you're not a fag are you? Because I don't want to be wasting my time.

The drinks arrive. Maxine's is in an enormous fishbowl of a glass. It's bright blue, with fruit and marshmallows swimming in it. Paper umbrellas stick out of it, and plastic monkeys hang from the rim.

CRAIG
That's the usual?

MAXINE
Don't let the girly shit fool you. It'd blow your shorts off.

Maxine downs it like a shot of whiskey. She pushes the empty glass to the bartender.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
Set me up again, Barry.

The bartender walks away with the empty glass.

CRAIG
I'm not a homosexual. I just like women for more than their bodies. I guess you could say I'm the new American male.

34 CONTINUED: (2) 34

MAXINE
You're a fag or a liar.

CRAIG
(backpedaling)
I mean, I *am* really attracted to you.

MAXINE
(mocking)
I mean, I am *really attracted to you.* Jesus, you *are* a fag. We can share recipes, if you like, Darlene.

Maxine gets up.

CRAIG
(at a loss)
No, wait! I like your tits.
(beat)
I love your tits. I want to fuck you.

MAXINE
(sitting)
Good. Now we're getting somewhere.
(beat)
Not a chance.

Maxine's second drink comes. She downs it, pushes the glass toward the bartender.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
So, tell me about yourself. If you can get your mind out of the gutter long enough, dog-boy.

CRAIG
Well, I'm a puppeteer...

The bartender comes back with Maxine's drink.

MAXINE
(to bartender)
Check.

CUT TO:

35 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 35

Lotte is combing Elijah. Craig enters.

35 CONTINUED:

CRAIG
Hi.

LOTTE
Hi.

CRAIG
(nervous, talking too much)
Sorry, I'm so late. Lester just wouldn't let me go. We're supposed to have dinner with him on Friday. I can get us out of it if you want. He's really amazing, this insane old lech. It's actually sort of amusing when you get past just how disgusting it is.

There is a silence. Lotte continues to comb out Elijah. Finally:

LOTTE
Did you eat?

CRAIG
Nah. I'm not hungry. I'm sorry I didn't call. It was just, you know, hard to get away.

LOTTE
I was worried.

CRAIG
I'm sorry. How was your evening?

LOTTE
Tom-Tom's puncture wound is infected.

CRAIG
The ferret?

LOTTE
The iguana.

CRAIG
Right.

LOTTE
I dressed the wound. Then I've just been feeding everyone, putting everyone to bed.

CRAIG
Yeah. You want a beer?

35 CONTINUED: (2) 35

LOTTE
No thanks. I'm going to turn in.

CRAIG
All right. I'll be in my workshop for a little while. I'll be in in a little while. I need to unwind a little.
(beat)
I'll be in soon. A little while.

LOTTE
'kay.

Lotte exits.

CUT TO:

36 INT. GARAGE - NIGHT 36

Craig works the Craig and Maxine puppets. The puppets sit on the edge of the small stage and chat. Craig does a pretty fair impersonation of Maxine's voice.

CRAIG
(as Maxine, fascinated)
Tell me, Craig, why do you love puppeteering?
(as Craig)
Well, Maxine, I'm not sure exactly. Perhaps it's the idea of becoming someone else for a little while. Being inside another skin. Moving differently, thinking differently, feeling differently.
(as Maxine)
Interesting. Would you like to be inside my skin, Craig? Think what I think? Feel what I feel?
(as Craig)
More than anything, Maxine.
(as Maxine)
It's good in here, Craig. Better than your wildest dreams.

The puppets kiss.

CUT TO:

37 INT. HALLWAY 7 1/2 FLOOR - DAY 37

Craig waits at the coffee machine, checks his watch. Finally Maxine approaches.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

CRAIG
Hi.

MAXINE
You're not someone I could get interested in, Craig. You play with dolls.

CRAIG
(rehearsed)
Puppets, Maxine. It's the idea of being inside someone else, feeling what they feel, seeing what they see...

MAXINE
Yikes.

Maxine turns to leave.

CRAIG
Please, let me explain.

Maxine turns back, stares with dead eyes at Craig, waiting.

CRAIG
It's just, and I've never done this before, Maxine, but it's just that I feel something for you. I've never felt this before for anyone, not even my wife. My future is with you, Maxine.

MAXINE
You might want to check those tarot cards one more time.

Maxine heads down the hall.

CUT TO:

38 INT. FILE ROOM - DAY 38

Craig files sadly. When he slams the drawer, some index cards piled on top fall behind the cabinet. He sighs and pushes the cabinet away from the wall to retrieve the cards. Behind it he discovers a small door which is nailed shut with a two-by-four.

CRAIG
(facetiously)
Another evil secret of the 7 1/2 floor.

38 CONTINUED: 38

Craig pries the two-by-four off and opens the door. It's a dark and wet membranous tunnel inside.

CRAIG
Holy shit.

Craig stares uncomprehendingly into the slime for a long moment, then tentatively reaches in and touches the membrane. He smells his hand. He climbs in. The door slams shut behind him.

CUT TO:

39 INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS 39

It's dark and wet. The walls are soft and slimy. There is a dripping sound. Craig crawls along. Soon something starts to pull Craig as if he is being sucked through a straw. There is a flash of light.

CUT TO:

40 INT. FANCY DINING ROOM - MORNING 40

The POV of someone reading a newspaper. The person lifts a cup of coffee to his mouth. There is a slurping sound. The person puts down the coffee cup and the newspaper, and stands up.

CRAIG (CONT'D) (V.O.)
(losing his balance)
Whoa! What the hell? Where am I?

We're still in POV. The person walks across the room, picks up his wallet from a coffee table, looks in a mirror and checks his teeth for food. It's John Malkovich.

CRAIG (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Holy shit! It's that actor guy. Shit! What's his name? That *actor* guy! What's happening? Am I inside him? Am I in his brain? Am I him? Is he me? Does he know I'm here? My brain is reeling! Is his brain reeling?

Malkovich walks to the front door, opens it, exits his apartment.

CUT TO:

41 INT. MAXINE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 41

Maxine sits at her desk, eats a sandwich, looks at a fashion magazine, and chats on the phone.

MAXINE
The puppeteer told me he loves me today.
(laughs)
I know. I can't think of anything more pathetic.

CUT TO:

42 INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS 42

John Malkovich's POV from the back seat of the cab. The cab pulls away from the curb.

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
(resonant throughout)
The Broadhurst Theater, please.

The cabbie studies Malkovich in his rearview mirror as he drives.

CABBIE
Say, aren't you that actor guy?

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
Yeah.

CABBIE
John Makel...

CRAIG (V.O.)
John Malkovich! Of course!

CABBIE
Mapplethorpe?

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
Malkovich.

CABBIE
Malkovich!

CRAIG (V.O.)
John *fucking* Malkovich!

CABBIE
Yeah. I liked you in that one movie.

42 CONTINUED: 42

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
Thank you.

CABBIE
The one where you're that jewel thief.

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
I never played a jewel thief.

CABBIE
Who am I thinking of?

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
I don't know.

CABBIE
I'm pretty sure it was you. Hey, could I get your autograph now? It's for my... oh, what the hell, it's for me! I'm your biggest fan!

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
Yeah, okay.

The cabbie hands a pad back over the seat. Malkovich reaches for it. There is a slurping sound.

CRAIG (V.O.)
(panicky)
Ahhhh!

The image starts to fade, then suddenly goes black.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. DITCH - DAY 43

It's on the side of Jersey Turnpike. There is a "pop" and Craig falls from nowhere into the ditch. He is soaking wet, and now dirty from the ditch. He stands, looks confusedly around, sees a N.J. Turnpike sign. After a moment, he goes to the side of the road and sticks out his thumb.

CUT TO:

44 INT. MAXINE'S OFFICE - LATER 44

Maxine sits behind her desk with her feet up, and talks on the phone.

44 CONTINUED:

MAXINE
Absolutely, doll. I'm just about to close up here.

Craig walks in, disheveled and exhausted. Maxine sees him, keeps talking.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Meet you at "The Pig" in twenty minutes.
(laughs lasciviously)
Oh yeah, *maybe* I'll keep my legs closed till then.
(hangs up. to Craig)
I'm splitting for the day. Lock up for me, won't you, darling.

Maxine stands, puts some stuff in her purse.

CRAIG
Don't you want to know what happened to me?

MAXINE
(considers)
No.

Maxine heads for the door. Craig grabs her arm.

CRAIG
This is important!

MAXINE
(looking at his hand on her arm)
It better be.

Craig sits Maxine down in a chair, lets go of her arm.

CRAIG
There's a tiny door in my office. It's a portal, Maxine. It takes you inside John Malkovich. You see the world through John Malkovich's eyes, then, after about fifteen minutes, you're spit out into a ditch on the side of The New Jersey Turnpike.

MAXINE
Sounds delightful. Who the fuck is John Malkovich?

44 CONTINUED: (2) 44

CRAIG
He's an actor. One of the great American actors of the 20th century.

MAXINE
What's he been in?

CRAIG
Lots of things. He's very well respected. That jewel thief movie, for example. The point is that this is a very odd thing, *supernatural*, for lack of a better word. It raises all sorts of philosophical questions about the nature of self, about the existence of the soul. Am I me? Is Malkovich Malkovich? Was the Buddha right, is duality an illusion? Do you see what a can of worms this portal is? I don't think I can go on living my life as I have lived it. There's only one thing to do. Let's get married right away.

MAXINE
Is this Malkovich fellow appealing?

CRAIG
Yes, of course. He's a celebrity.

MAXINE
Good. We'll sell tickets.

CRAIG
Tickets to Malkovich?

MAXINE
Exactly. Two hundred dollars a pop.

CRAIG
But there's something profound here, Maxine, we can't exploit it.

MAXINE
I need you for this, Craig. You're my man on the inside.

CRAIG
I'm your man? You need me?

MAXINE
(bored)
Sure. Whatever.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (3) 44

CRAIG
(pleased)
Wow.
(then:)
But, Maxine, can of worms! End of the world! Illusory nature of existence!

MAXINE
I'll protect you, dollface.

Maxine reaches over and squeezes his lips affectionately between her thumb and forefinger.

CRAIG
(in love)
Oh, Maxine.

DISSOLVE TO:

45 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 45

Craig and Lotte are getting into evening clothes.

LOTTE
Don't be ridiculous. There is no such thing as a portal into someone else's brain.

CRAIG
Brain, soul, I'm telling you, Lotte, I was right inside him looking out. We're going to be rich.

LOTTE
I want to try.

CRAIG
What?

LOTTE
I want to be John Malkovich. Tomorrow morning. Plus I'd like to meet this partner of yours.

CRAIG
(nervously)
No! Well, you know we can't do it during the day. LesterCorp is open during the day. I'll tell you what. Let's do it tonight. Right now.

45 CONTINUED: 45

LOTTE
Now?

CRAIG
Yeah. We'll do it right now. On the way to Lester's house.

CUT TO:

46 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 46

Craig holds open the small door as Lotte hesitantly climbs in.

CRAIG
I'll meet you on the turnpike.

LOTTE
I'm scared.

The door slams shut.

CRAIG
Me too, babe.

Craig hurries out of the office.

CUT TO:

47 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 47

Malkovich is in the shower. We watch from his POV as he soaps himself. He does this in a sensual manner.

LOTTE (V.O.)
Holy cow!

Malkovich steps out of the shower, slowly towels himself dry.

LOTTE (V.O.)
Oh, yes. Yes.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. DITCH - NIGHT 48

Lotte lands in the ditch. She is wet and ragged. Traffic whizzes by. Craig turns on the headlights in his parked car. They shine on Lotte. Craig steps out of the car.

LOTTE
I have to go back.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

CRAIG
Okay. Maybe tomorrow.

LOTTE
I have to go back <u>now</u>.

CRAIG
We'll talk about it in the car.

Craig helps Lotte up and toward the car.

CUT TO:

49 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S CAR - NIGHT 49

Craig drives. Lotte looks distractedly out the window.

LOTTE
I have to go back, Craig. Being inside did something to me. All of a sudden everything made sense. I knew who I was.

CRAIG
You weren't you. You were John Malkovich.

LOTTE
(tickled)
I was, wasn't I?
(yelling out the window)
I was John *fucking* Malkovich!
(laughs, then intensely)
Take me back, Craig.

CRAIG
Tomorrow. We're late for Lester.

CUT TO:

50 INT. LESTER'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT 50

It's a posh place with flocked wallpaper and candelabras. Lester, Craig, and Lotte sit around an elegantly appointed table with all different sorts of juices in front of them. Lotte is still wet, still distracted. Lester sits quite close to her.

LESTER
Tell me, Lotte, can you understand a word I'm saying?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

LOTTE
Yes, of course, Dr. Lester. You were lucidly and wittily explaining the nutritional value of ingesting minerals in a colloidal form. And I couldn't agree more!

LESTER
Oh, be still my heart.

LOTTE
Dr. Lester, would you point me toward the restroom?

LESTER
With immense pleasure, my dear. Down that hall, ninth door on the left. Watch the step down. It's sunken, you know.

Lotte smiles. Lester returns the smile. Lotte heads down the hall.

LESTER
(to Craig)
More beet-spinach juice, my friend?

CUT TO:

51 INT. LESTER'S HALLWAY - NIGHT 51

Lotte walks down the ritzy hallway. She is counting closed doors in search of the bathroom. She opens a door, looks inside, gasps, then enters the room.

CUT TO:

52 INT. LESTER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 52

Lotte enters the room. It is dimly lit. The walls are covered with photographs of John Malkovich. It looks like a museum: photos of Malkovich as a boy, as a young man, mug-shot-style profiles, life-sized naked photos of Malkovich from various angles, photo-copies of official documents: birth certificate, college diploma, handwriting samples, a family tree.

LOTTE
(under breath)
What the hell...?

CUT TO:

53 INT. CAR - NIGHT 53

Craig and Lotte drive home.

LOTTE
What do you suppose Lester's relationship with John Malkovich is?

CRAIG
I don't know. I imagine he probably knows about the portal. Why?

LOTTE
No reason. I was just thinking, do you think it's weird that John Malkovich has a portal? Do you think it might have some... *significance*, for example?

CRAIG
I never thought about it. Why?

LOTTE
I don't know.
(beat, attitude shift)
It's sort of sexy that he has a portal though, don't you think? Y'know, it's almost... vaginal. It's like he's got a penis and a vagina. It's sort of like Malkovich's feminine side. I like that.

Craig considers this.

CUT TO:

54 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S GARAGE - NIGHT 54

Craig sits at his work table. We hear the shower running in the background. Craig is pulling the heads off of the Craig and the Maxine puppets. He puts the Maxine head on the Craig puppet. He puts the Craig head on the Maxine puppet. He sighs.

CRAIG
My kingdom for *your* portal, Maxine.

CUT TO:

55 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 55

Lotte, in the shower, turns it off and steps out. She towels herself dry in much the same way as Malkovich. Her eyes are closed. She opens them slowly and sees herself in the

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: 55

mirror. Disappointedly, she drops the towel and heads out of the bathroom.

CUT TO:

56 INT. MAXINE'S OFFICE - MORNING 56

The door is ajar. Maxine sits at her desk composing an ad. Craig stands behind her, ostensibly looking over her shoulder, but actually studying the back of her head. He sighs.

CUT TO:

57 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS 57

Lotte is in the elevator as it ascends. She holds the crowbar. A few old people ride up with her. She smiles at them. They smile back.

CUT TO:

58 INT. MAXINE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 58

MAXINE
Okay. Here it is.
(reading)
Ever want to be someone else? Now you can. No kidding. Only two hundred dollars for fifteen minutes. Visit J.M. Inc., Mertin-Flemmer Building, nightly from 9 PM to 3 AM.

CRAIG
Sounds good. Oblique but intriguing. Phone it in.

Maxine dials the phone. Lotte peeks in.

CRAIG
(What is she doing here?)
Lotte!

LOTTE
I heard your voice.
(to Maxine)
Hello.

CRAIG
Why aren't you at work?

58 CONTINUED:

LOTTE
Is this your partner? She's pretty. I had to come back and do the Malkovich ride again. Fuck everything else. Is this her?

MAXINE
(into phone)
Yes, hello, I wanted to place an ad.
(to Lotte)
Hi, you're Craig's wife?

LOTTE
Yes, Hi.

CRAIG
Lotte, Maxine. Maxine, Lotte.

Lotte and Maxine shake hands.

LOTTE
Hi. Have you done Malkovich yet?

MAXINE
Hi, uh...
(into phone)
Hi. I wanted to place an ad. Yes. *"Ever want to be someone else?"* No, that's the ad, but let's talk about you in a minute. *"Ever want to be someone else? Now you can. No kidding..."*

CRAIG
(to Lotte)
You should be at work.

LOTTE
I've been going over and over my experience last night. It was amazing.
(beat)
I've decided I'm a transsexual. Isn't that the craziest thing?

CRAIG
What, are you nuts? That's Springer talking.

LOTTE
Everything felt right for the first time. I need to go back to make sure, then if the feeling is still there, I'm going to
(MORE)

58 CONTINUED: (2) 58

LOTTE (cont'd)
speak to Dr. Feldman about sexual reassignment surgery.

CRAIG
This is absurd. Besides Feldman's an allergist. If you're going to do something, do it right.

Lotte starts to tear up.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
It's just the thrill of seeing through someone else's eyes, sweetie. It'll pass.

LOTTE
Don't stand in the way of my actualization as a man, Craig.

MAXINE
(hanging up the phone)
Let her go, Craig.
(smiling at Lotte)
I mean "him."

CRAIG
(anything for Maxine)
Yeah, okay.
(a thought)
But it's the middle of the day. How am I going to get her past Lester?

MAXINE
Yawn. Figure it out.

Craig sighs and leads Lotte out of the office.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Davey? Max. Get me John Malkovich's home phone? That's great. Love ya and owe ya.

CUT TO:

59 INT. JOHN MALKOVICH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 59

Malkovich's POV. He sits on the couch, drinks coffee, and reads a copy of Awake and Sing. Bach plays on the stereo in the background.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 59

MALKOVICH
(reading aloud)
So you believe in God...you got something for it? You worked for all the capitalists. You harvested the fruit from your labor? You got God!

LOTTE (V.O.)
What raw, animal power!

MALKOVICH
But the past comforts you? The present smiles on you, yes?

The phone rings. Malkovich puts down the script, and picks up the phone.

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yeah?

MAXINE (O.S.)
(telephone voice)
Mr. Malkovich?

MALKOVICH
Who's calling?

MAXINE (O.S.)
You don't know me, but I'm a great admirer of yours.

MALKOVICH
How'd you get this number?

MAXINE (O.S.)
It's just that I fantasize about you, and, well, speaking to you now has gotten me sort of excited and...

LOTTE (O.S.)
(turned on)
Oh, I like this.

MALKOVICH
Listen, this is not amusing. Please don't call here any...

MAXINE (O.S.)
(giggling)
Ooh, such authority! My nipples are at attention, General Malkovich, *sir*. So

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2) 59

MAXINE (cont'd)
I'll be at Bernardo's tonight at eight. Please, please meet me there. I just adored you in that jewel thief movie...

Malkovich hangs up the phone.

LOTTE (V.O.)
My God!
(attempting thought control)
Meet her there. Meet her there. Meet her there. Meet her there. Meet her there...

Malkovich goes back to his script.

LOTTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Meet her there. Meet her there. Meet her there...

Malkovich picks up a pen and writes: Bernardo's 8:00.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. DITCH - MORNING 60

Craig waits. Lotte pops into the ditch. She's wet and slimey.

CRAIG
How was it?

LOTTE
I have to go back tonight. At eight. Exactly.

CRAIG
Why?

LOTTE
Don't crowd me, Craig.

CUT TO:

61 INT. BERNARDO'S - NIGHT 61

Malkovich's POV. It's a busy Italian restaurant. Malkovich looks around, checks his watch: 8:03. A guy walks up to him.

GUY
Excuse me, are you John Malkovich?

MALKOVICH
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 61

GUY
Wow. You were really great in that movie where you played that retard.

MALKOVICH
Thank you very much.

GUY
I just wanted to tell you that. And say thank you. I have a cousin that's a retard, so, as you can imagine, it means a lot to me to see retards portrayed on the silver screen so compassionately.

The guy walks away. Malkovich scans the room. Maxine enters the restaurant. We see her, but Malkovich doesn't single her out of the crowd. She looks around.

LOTTE (V.O.)
Maxine!

Maxine spots Malkovich, and heads over. He focuses on her.

MAXINE
Hi. I'm so glad you decided to come. I'm Maxine.

Maxine holds out her hand. She is charming. Malkovich takes her hand.

MALKOVICH
I'm John. I didn't think I was going to come, but I felt oddly compelled. I have to admit I was a bit intrigued by your voice.

LOTTE (V.O.)
God, she's beautiful. The way she's looking at me. At him. At us.

MAXINE
And the funny thing is, Mr. Malkovich, my voice is probably the least intriguing thing about me.

LOTTE (V.O.)
I've never been looked at like this by a woman.

MALKOVICH
Can I get you a drink?

61 CONTINUED: (2) 61

MAXINE
Whatever you're having.

CUT TO:

62 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S CAR - NIGHT 62

Craig drives. Lotte is soaking wet. She stares out the window.

CRAIG
So how was it? What was he doing?

LOTTE
Oh, you know, not a lot. Just hanging around his apartment. I think he must be a lonely man.

CRAIG
You see, men can feel unfulfilled, too. I'm glad you're realizing that. You shouldn't be so quick to assume that switching bodies would be the answer to all your problems.

LOTTE
You're right. You know I was thinking that we should have Maxine over for dinner. Since you two are partners and all. It might be a nice gesture.

CRAIG
I don't know. There's some tension between us. I'd hate to expose you to that.

LOTTE
It'll be okay. I'll fix my lasagna. We'll smoke a joint.
(dreamily)
Tensions will melt away.

CUT TO:

63 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT 63

Craig, Lotte, and Maxine are seated at the table and eating lasagna. Lotte eyes Maxine. Craig eyes Maxine. There is an awkward silence.

63 CONTINUED: 63

LOTTE
(to Maxine)
Did you know that Eskimos have not one, but fifty words for snow. It's because they have so much of it.

CRAIG
After dinner I'll show you my puppets.

MAXINE
Ah.

LOTTE
After that I'll introduce you to my favorite monkey, Elijah. He's got an ulcer, due to a suppressed childhood trauma. But we're getting to the bottom of it.
(whispers)
Psychotherapy.

CUT TO:

64 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - A BIT LATER 64

Dinner is over. Craig, Maxine, and Lotte sit on the couch passing a joint back and forth. They are stoned.

MAXINE
(to no one inparticular)
The way I see it, the world is divided into those go after what they want and those who don't. The passionate ones, the ones who go after what they want, may not get what they want, but they remain vital, in touch with themselves, and when they lie on their deathbeds, they have few regrets. The ones who don't go after what they want... well, who gives a shit about them anyway?

Maxine laughs. There is another silence. Suddenly, at the same moment, both Craig and Lotte lunge for Maxine and start kissing her passionately about the face and neck. They stop just as suddenly and look at each other.

CRAIG
You?

Lotte looks away.

64 CONTINUED: 64

MAXINE
Craig, I just don't find you attractive. And, Lotte, I'm smitten with you, but only when you're in Malkovich. When I looked into his eyes last night, I could feel you peering out. Behind the stubble and the too-prominent brow and the male pattern baldness, I sensed your feminine longing peering out, and it just slew me.

CRAIG
(disgusted)
My God.

Lotte strokes Maxine's face. Craig gets up, stares out window.

MAXINE
(to Lotte, removing her hand)
Only as *John*, sweetie. I'm sorry.
(gets up)
Thanks for a wonderful dinner.
(walks past window. to Craig)
No hard feelings, partner.

Maxine exits. Craig and Lotte look at each other, really stoned, trying to focus on the grave situation.

LOTTE
I want a divorce.

CUT TO:

65 INT. HALLWAY, 7 1/2 FLOOR - NIGHT 65

The hallway is empty with only the exit signs illuminating it. The door to LesterCorp is propped open and a sign reading "J.M.Industries" is taped to it.

CUT TO:

66 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 66

It is deadly silent. Craig and Maxine sit on folding chairs. The wall clock ticks. Craig whistles tunelessly, every once in a while looking up and discreetly checking out Maxine. Eventually there is a knock at the door.

CRAIG
(a little too urgently)
Come in!

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

Erroll, a sad, fat young man enters meekly.

ERROLL
Hello. I'm here about the ad.

CRAIG
Please, have a seat.

Erroll sits in a chair in front of Craig. He glances nervously over at Maxine.

ERROLL
When you say, I can be somebody else, what do you mean exactly?

CRAIG
Exactly that. We can put you inside someone else's body for fifteen minutes.

ERROLL
Oh, this is just the medical breakthrough I've been waiting for. Are there side effects? Please say no! Please say no!

MAXINE
No.

ERROLL
Long term psychic or physiological repercussions?

MAXINE
Don't be an ass.

ERROLL
Can I be anyone I want?

CRAIG
Well...

MAXINE
You can be John Malkovich.

ERROLL
That's perfect! My second choice. Ah, this is wonderful. Too good to be true! You see, I'm a sad man. Sad and fat and alone. Oh, I've tried all the diets, my friends. Lived for a year on nothing but imitation mayonnaise. Did it work? You be the judge. But Malkovich! King of New York! Man about town! Most eligible
(MORE)

66 CONTINUED: (2) 66

ERROLL (cont'd)
bachelor! Bon Vivant! The Schopenhauer of the 20th century! Thin man extraordinaire!

MAXINE
Two hundred dollars.

ERROLL
Yes. Yes. A thousand times, yes!

Erroll takes out his wallet.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. DITCH - NIGHT 67

Craig waits by his car, checks his watch. "Pop!" Erroll plops into the ditch, wet and unkempt. He looks around, sees Craig, charges him with a yell and gives him an enormous bear hug.

ERROLL
Oh, thank you! Thank you! A thousand times, thank you!

CRAIG
(gasping for air)
Tell your friends.

ERROLL
Oh, I will, and I have many, many friends and associates, my friend. All, by the way, in Overeaters Anonymous. All of them fat and alone like me, all of them dream of being someone else, all of them with John Malkovich as their second choice!

CUT TO:

68 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 68

Craig lies listlessly on his back on the floor and stares at the ceiling. Lotte enters with a bag of groceries.

LOTTE
Hey.

CRAIG
Hey.

Lotte puts the groceries down, falls back onto the couch. A rabbit jumps onto her lap. She absently strokes it as she watches Craig for a bit.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 68

LOTTE
Boy, she's really done a number on us, huh?

CRAIG
Yeah.

LOTTE
It's like somehow when she first looked at me, my whole life before that moment became irrelevant.

CRAIG
I know what you mean.

LOTTE
Did we ever love each other like we love her, Craig?

CRAIG
I can't remember.

LOTTE
I don't think we did.

CRAIG
I don't think so

LOTTE
(beat)
She doesn't love either of us you know.

CRAIG
So it seems.

He and Lotte stare at each other for a long while.

LOTTE
Can't we teach ourselves to love each other the way we love her?

CRAIG
It would seem the practical thing to do, wouldn't it.

Lotte lies on her back on the floor next to Craig. They both stare at the ceiling.

LOTTE
We've put so much time into this relationship after all.

68 CONTINUED: (2) 68

CRAIG
We really have.

LOTTE
I have a great deal of affection for you, Craig.

CRAIG
I know. Me too.

Lotte turns and kisses Craig on the cheek.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
What about Maxine?

LOTTE
Fuck Maxine.

CRAIG
We wish.

They look at each other and laugh, then fall into an embrace. They begin to make love, both clearly somewhere else.

DISSOLVE TO:

69 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S BEDROOM - LATER 69

Craig and Lotte are in bed. Craig is asleep. Lotte's eyes are open. She quietly gets out of bed.

CUT TO:

70 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 70

The phone rings. Maxine is being given a bikini wax by an attractive, uniformed young woman.

MAXINE
J.M. Inc.

LOTTE (O.S.)
(whispering)
I have to see you. Please. Can you call him and invite yourself over?

MAXINE
Um, when?

LOTTE (O.S.)
Give me one hour to get inside. Exactly. Thank you, Maxine.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

Maxine checks the watch on the uniformed woman's wrist, which is busily at work in Maxine's crotch. The time is 3:11 AM.

CUT TO:

71 INT. MALKOVICH'S APARTMENT - A BIT LATER 71

The doorbell rings. Malkovich answers it. Maxine stands there in a sheer black nightgown

MAXINE
Thanks so much for having me over, sugar plum.

MALKOVICH
Oh, I'm really glad you called.

Malkovich starts to grope Maxine.

MALKOVICH
Shall we to the boudoir?

She lifts his hand from her crotch and checks his wristwatch. The time is 3:50.

MAXINE
Couple a minutes. I'm early.

CUT TO:

72 INT. MALKOVICH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 72

Maxine and Malkovich sit a bit awkwardly next to each other on the couch.

MAXINE
So, do you enjoy being an actor?

MALKOVICH
Oh sure. It's very rewarding...

The digital clock on the VCR clicks over to 4:11 AM. Maxine's look softens, and she kisses Malkovich hard on the lips. He seems surprised, but quickly warms to it. We shift to Malkovich's POV as Maxine begins to unbutton Malkovich's shirt.

LOTTE (V.O.)
Oh my darling. Oh my sweetheart.

72 CONTINUED: 72

MAXINE
I love you, Lotte.

LOTTE (V.O.)
Maxine...

MALKOVICH
(stopping)
I'm sorry, did you just call me "Lotte"?

MAXINE
Do you mind?

MALKOVICH
(thinking)
No, I guess not.

They go back to it.

MAXINE
Oh, my sweet, beautiful Lotte.

MALKOVICH
(thinks he's playing along)
Yes, Maxine, yes.

LOTTE (V.O.)
This is too good to be true.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. DITCH - EARLY MORNING 73

With a gasp and a wail of release, Lotte pops into the ditch. She is soaking wet and breathes heavily. She just lies there.

CUT TO:

74 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING 74

Craig sits hunched over a cup of coffee. The front door is heard opening. After a moment Lotte appears in the kitchen doorway. She is caked with dirt. Craig looks up at her.

CRAIG
You were *him*, weren't you?

LOTTE
(quietly)
Yes.

74 CONTINUED: 74

CRAIG
And he was with her.

LOTTE
We love her, Craig. I'm sorry.

CRAIG
We?

LOTTE
Me and John.

CRAIG
Don't forget me.

LOTTE
Well, you have the Maxine action figure to play with.

Craig looks down at his coffee.

LOTTE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. That was nasty.

CRAIG
Life is confusing, isn't it?

LOTTE
Jesus. Who knew?

CRAIG
I feel that somehow my parents never prepared me to deal with this situation. Not that I blame them. How could they know? Today's world is so much more complicated than theirs.
(beat)
I have to move out for a while, Lot. Living here is too painful.

LOTTE
I'm so sorry, Craig.

CUT TO:

75 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 75

Craig enters with red-rimmed eyes. Maxine sits on the floor and leans against a cabinet. She's wearing a short skirt, her legs are casually spread and she appears radiant.

75 CONTINUED: 75

MAXINE
You're late, my little cowboy.

CRAIG
Are you torturing me on purpose?

MAXINE
(matter of fact)
I've fallen in love.

CRAIG
I don't think so. I've fallen in love! *This* is what people who've fallen in love look like!

MAXINE
You picked the unrequited variety. Very bad for the skin.

CRAIG
You're evil, Maxine.

MAXINE
Do you have any idea what it's like to have two people look at you with total lust and devotion through the same pair of eyes? No I don't suppose you would. It's quite a thrill, Craiggy.

Craig turns and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

76 INT. HALLWAY 7 1/2 FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 76

Craig hurries past a long line of fat people, all looking eager, all clutching cash. His face is red with rage.

CUT TO:

77 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 77

Craig stands still and tense, with gun in hand. We hear the front door unlock. Lotte enters. She does not see Craig. He grabs her from behind as she passes. Lotte screams. Craig holds the gun to her head.

LOTTE
What the hell are you doing? Jesus, is that real?

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

CRAIG
It's real and I don't know how to use it very well, so don't make any sudden moves.

LOTTE
I'm your Goddamn wife, Craig. Once you vowed to cherish me forever. Now you hold a gun to my head?

CRAIG
Yeah, well welcome to the nineties.

LOTTE
Suck my dick!

CRAIG
(slapping her)
Shut up!

Lotte is stunned. She feels the muzzle against her forehead. She shuts up. Keeping the gun trained on Lotte, Craig dials the phone. He hands the receiver to her. He holds his ear close to the receiver also.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Tell her you need to see her.

LOTTE
(to Craig)
You bastard.

Craig cocks the pistol.

MAXINE (V.O.)
J.M. Inc. Be all that someone else can be.

LOTTE
(looking at Craig)
I have to see you.

MAXINE (V.O.)
Sweetie! Oh, but we can't. It's business hours. I need to keep the membranous tunnel open for paying customers.

CRAIG
(sotto)
Tell her, what the hell, close early tonight, live dangerously.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (2) 77

LOTTE
What the hell, darling. Close early tonight, live dangerously

MAXINE (V.O.)
Oooh, doll. I love this new devil-may-care side of you. Alrighty, I'll track down Lover-boy, and I'll see both of you in one hour. Exactamundo.

Maxine hangs up. Lotte hands the phone to Craig, who hangs it up. Craig opens up the big cage where Elijah is housed, and motions with the gun for Lotte to enter.

LOTTE
(screaming)
Help! He's locking me in a cage!

Craig slaps Lotte hard. She looks at him, almost sadly.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
Shut up!

PARROT
Shut up!

CRAIG
Lesson number one: Be careful what you teach your parrot.

Craig tapes Lotte's mouth, ties her hands and feet. Elijah watches him tie her. He becomes somewhat agitated, and holds his stomach.

CUT TO:

78 INT. BROADHURST THEATER - NIGHT 78

Malkovich is rehearsing some business on stage. Maxine watches from the house. She anxiously checks her watch, then points to it so Malkovich can see.

MALKOVICH
Tommy, can I take fifteen?

CUT TO:

79 INT. MALKOVICH'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 79

Malkovich and Maxine are having sex on the make-up table, against the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: 79

MAXINE
Oh, Lotte... Oh, sweetie...

We now watch the scene from Malkovich's POV.

MALKOVICH
Maxine...

CRAIG (V.O.)
I can't believe it. This is too good to be true.

CUT TO:

80 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 80

Craig is toweling himself off, hurriedly combing his hair. Maxine enters.

CRAIG
You're glowing again.

MAXINE
A girl has a right to glow if she wants. It's in the fucking constitution.

Maxine sits. Craig smiles to himself.

CUT TO:

81 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING 81

Craig is feeding the various caged animals. He puts two plates of food in Elijah's cage. Lotte is ungagged and unbound now. She eats as Craig slumps down next to the cage, gun in hand.

CRAIG
It was lovely being you being Malkovich, my dear. I'd never seen the passionate side of sweet Maxine before, or her actual tits for that matter. If only, I've been thinking to myself, if only I could actually feel what Malkovich feels, rather than just see what he sees... And then, dare I say it, if only I could control his arms, his legs, his pelvis, and make them do my bidding.

81 CONTINUED: 81

LOTTE
It'll never happen, fuckface.

CRAIG
Ah, but you're forgetting one thing, Lambchop. I'm a puppeteer.

Craig picks up the phone and dials. He smiles as he holds the receiver up to Lotte's face.

CUT TO:

82 INT. MAXINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 82

Malkovich and Maxine are having sex on Maxine's couch.

MAXINE
Lotte, this is so good...

CRAIG (V.O.)
(tense, commanding)
Move right hand across her left breast now. Move right hand across her left breast now. Move right hand across her left breast now.

Malkovich clumsily, awkwardly moves his hand across Maxine's breast.

CRAIG (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Holy shit, yes!

MALKOVICH
Howa shit! Yes!

CRAIG (V.O.)
Holy shit! He said what I said!

MALKOVICH
Howa shit! He said wha I said!

MAXINE
Lotte? Is that you?

CRAIG (V.O.)
Yes, yes, sweetheart, yes!

MALKOVICH
Yes, yes, swee'heart, yes!
(scared)
What the fuck is going on? I'm not talking. This is not me!

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

MAXINE
Oh, Lotte...

Maxine kisses Malkovich hard on the lips. There is a sucking sound.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. DITCH - NIGHT 83

There is a pop and Craig lands in the ditch.

CUT TO:

84 INT. MAXINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 84

A panicked Malkovich is pulling on his clothes.

MALKOVICH
Something was making me talk. Some Goddamn thing was making me move. I gotta get out of here.

MAXINE
Oh, Dollface, it was just your passion for me taking hold.

MALKOVICH
No, *Dollface*, I know what my passion taking hold feels like. I gotta go.

He leaves. Maxine falls back on the couch and sighs contentedly.

CUT TO:

85 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 85

A wet, messy Craig sits next to Lotte's cage. Lotte is bound and gagged.

CRAIG
I did it, sweetie. I moved his arm across your girlfriend's glorious tit. I made him talk, sort of. And, oh, there was the beginning of sensation in the fingertips. Ummmm-mmmm! It's just a matter of practice before Malkovich becomes nothing more than another puppet hanging next to my worktable. Coffee?

CUT TO:

86 INT. MALKOVICH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 86

Malkovich paces nervously, a glass of whisky in his hand. Kevin Bacon sits on the couch and fiddles with a Rubic's Cube.

MALKOVICH
It's like nothing I've ever felt before. I think I'm going crazy.

KEVIN BACON
I'm sure you're not going crazy.

MALKOVICH
Kevin, I'm telling you... it was like nothing I've...

KEVIN BACON
Yeah yeah yeah. Yadda yadda yadda. Were you stoned?

MALKOVICH
Yes, but you see, someone else was talking through my mouth....

KEVIN BACON
You were stoned. Case closed. End of story. How hot is this babe?

MALKOVICH
I think it might've been this Lotte woman talking through me. Maxine likes to call me Lotte.

KEVIN BACON
Ouch. Now that's hot. She's using you to channel some dead lesbian lover. Let me know when you're done with her. This is my type of chick.

MALKOVICH
I'm done with her now. Tonight really creeped me out.

KEVIN BACON
You're crazy to let go of a chick who calls you Lotte. I tell you that as a friend.

MALKOVICH
I don't know anything about her. What if she's some kind of witch or something?

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: 86

KEVIN BACON
All the better. Hey, Hot Lesbian Witches, next Geraldo, buddy boy. Ha ha ha.

MALKOVICH
I gotta know the truth, Kevin.

KEVIN BACON
Truth is for suckers, Johnny-Boy.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT 87

Malkovich, in a baseball cap and sunglasses, sits in a parked car. He drinks from a thermos. After a moment, Maxine emerges from the building and hails a cab. Malkovich follows at a safe distance.

CUT TO:

88 INT. 7 1/2 FLOOR - NIGHT 88

The elevator doors are pried open. It's packed with fat people. Maxine and the fat people climb out. The last to emerge is Malkovich. He is astounded by the squat dimensions of the floor. He turns the corner and sees a long line of crouching fat people. Maxine goes into the office and closes the door. Malkovich sees "J.M. Inc." taped to the door. He turns to the first fat man and line.

MALKOVICH
Excuse me, what type of service does this company provide?

FAT MAN
You get to be John Malkovich for fifteen minutes. Two hundred clams.

MALKOVICH
(quietly flipped)
I see.

FAT MAN
No cutting, by the way.

Malkovich pounds on the door.

FAT MAN (CONT'D)
No cutting!

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: 88

Several fat people jump on Malkovich, and start beating him. Craig steps out of the office.

CRAIG
Hey! Break it up! Break it up! Everybody gets a chance to be...

The fat people climb off Malkovich. His glasses and cap have been knocked off and everyone recognizes him.

FAT MAN
It's him! Oh, we're so sorry Mr. Malkovich! I hope me and my associates from Overeaters Anonymous didn't hurt you too terribly.

MALKOVICH
(to Craig)
Inside.

CUT TO:

89 INT. FILE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 89

Craig and Malkovich enter. Maxine looks up, startled, but controlling it.

MAXINE
Darling!

MALKOVICH
What the fuck is going on?

CRAIG
Mr. Malkovich, my name is Craig Schwartz. I can explain. We operate a little business here that... simulates, for our clientele, the experience of ...being you, actually.

MALKOVICH
Simulates?

CRAIG
Sure, after a fashion.

MALKOVICH
I want to try.

CRAIG
You? Why I'm sure it would pale in comparison to the actual experience.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED: 89

MALKOVICH
Let me try!

MAXINE
Let him try.

CRAIG
Of course, right this way, Mr. Malkovich. Compliments of the house.

Craig ushers Malkovich to the portal door, opens it.

MALKOVICH
(repulsed by the slime)
Jesus.

Malkovich climbs in. The door closes.

CRAIG
What happens when a man climbs through his own portal?

MAXINE
(shrugs)
How the hell would I know? I wasn't a philosophy major.

CUT TO:

90 INT. MEMBRANOUS TUNNEL - NIGHT 90

Malkovich crawls through. It's murky. He's tense. Suddenly there is a slurping sound.

CUT TO:

91 PSYCHEDELIC MONTAGE 91

We see Malkovich hurtling through different environments. It's scary: giant toads, swirling eddies of garish, colored lights, naked old people pointing and laughing, black velvet clown paintings.

CUT TO:

92 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT 92

Malkovich pops into a chair in a swank night club. He's wearing a tuxedo. The woman across the table from him is also Malkovich, but in a gown. He looks around the restaurant. Everyone is Malkovich in different clothes.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED: 92

Malkovich is panicked. The girl Malkovich across the table looks at him seductively, winks and talks.

GIRL MALKOVICH
Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich...

Malkovich looks confused. The Malkovich Waiter approaches, pen and pad in hand, ready to take their orders.

WAITER MALKOVICH
Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich?

GIRL MALKOVICH
(studying menu)
Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich.

WAITER MALKOVICH
Malkovich Malkovich.
(Turning to Malkovich)
Malkovich?

Malkovich looks down at the menu. Every item is "Malkovich." He screams:

MALKOVICH
Malkovich!

The waiter jots it down on his pad.

WAITER MALKOVICH
Malkovich.

Malkovich pushes himself away from the table and runs for the exit. He passes the stage where a girl singer Malkovich is singing sensuously into the microphone. She is backed by a '40's style big band of Malkoviches.

SINGING MALKOVICH
Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich...

Malkovich flies through the back door.

CUT TO:

93 EXT. DITCH - NIGHT 93

Malkovich lands with a thud in the ditch. Craig is waiting there with his van. On its side is painted "See The World in Malk-O-Vision" followed by a phone number. Malkovich is huddled and shivering and soaking wet.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 93

CRAIG
So how was it?

MALKOVICH
That... was... no... simulation.

CRAIG
I know. I'm sorry...

MALKOVICH
I have been to the dark side. I have seen a world that no man should ever see.

CRAIG
Really? For most people it's a rather pleasant experience. What exactly did you...

MALKOVICH
This portal is mine and it must be sealed up forever. For the love of God.

CRAIG
With all respect, sir, I discovered that portal. It is my livelihood.

MALKOVICH
It's *my* head, Schwartz, and I'll see you in court!

Malkovich trudges off along the shoulder of the turnpike.

CRAIG
(calling after him)
And who's to say I won't be seeing what you're seeing... in court?

Cars whiz by Malkovich. Someone yells from a passing car.

MOTORIST
Hey, Malkovich! Think fast!

Malkovich looks up. A beer can comes flying out of the car and hits him on the head.

CUT TO:

94 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 94

Craig is feeding the animals. His gun is stuck in his pants. He gets to Lotte's cage. She is bound but ungagged. She looks haggard.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

LOTTE
Once this was a relationship based on love. Now you have me in a cage with a monkey and a gun to my head.

CRAIG
Things change. Anyway, you gave up your claim to that love the first time you stuck your dick in Maxine.

LOTTE
You fell in love with her first.

CRAIG
Yeah but I didn't do anything about it. Out of respect for our marriage.

LOTTE
You didn't do anything about it out of respect for the fact that she wouldn't let you near her with a ten foot pole, which is, by the way, about nine feet, nine inches off the mark anyway.

CRAIG
(beat)
That's true. Oh, God, Lotte, what have I become? My wife in a cage with a monkey. A gun in my hand. Betrayal in my heart.

LOTTE
Maybe this is what you've always been, Craig, you just never faced it before.

CRAIG
Perhaps you're right. I can't let you go though. Too much has happened. You're my ace in the hole.

LOTTE
I need a shower.

CRAIG
I'm sorry. Oh God, I'm sorry. I'm some kind of monster. I'm the guy you read about in the paper and go, "he's some kind of monster."

LOTTE
You're not a monster, Craig. Just a confused man.

94 CONTINUED: (2) 94

CRAIG
I love you so much.
(dials phone, opens her cage, puts phone to her ear)
But I gotta go now. I've got to go be Johnny.

MAXINE (O.S.)
J.M. Inc. Be all that someone...

LOTTE
We have to meet.

MAXINE (O.S.)
One hour.

Craig hangs up, tapes Lotte's mouth.

CRAIG
I'll tell you all about it when I get home.

Craig exits. Lotte fiddles with the ropes on her wrists. Elijah, slumped in the corner of the cage, blankly watches her moving hands. Suddenly his eyes narrow. Something is going on in his brain. We move slowly into his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

95 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY 95

It is a memory: blurry and overexposed, the color washed out. The sound of running feet, huffing frantic breathing. We watch from up in a tree (Elijah's POV) as two men in safari suits chase a couple of chimps across the jungle floor. The chimps are screaming as the safari men tackle them and tie them up. The safari men laugh.

SAFARI MAN
Well, these monkeys ain't going nowheres. Let's get us a couple a brews 'fore the boss comes back...

The safari men leave the chimps on the ground. We descend from the trees to the ground next to the bound chimps. One of the chimps looks at the camera. He grunts and squeals.

CHIMP ONE (SUBTITLES)
Son, untie your mother and me! Quickly! Before the great bald chimp-men return.

95 CONTINUED: 95

A small pair of chimp hands enter in to frame and struggle to untie the ropes, but to no avail. Chimp Two speaks.

CHIMP TWO (SUBTITLES)
Hurry, Elijah!

SAFARI MAN
Why you little bastard!

Elijah is wrestled to the ground amidst much screaming.

DISSOLVE TO:

96 INT. CRAIG AND LOTTE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 96

Elijah shakes off the the memory and looks determinedly at the ropes on Lotte's hands. He attempts to untie the knot. He works furiously and he succeeds. Lotte pulls the tape from her mouth.

LOTTE
Oh, Elijah, you are magnificent!

Elijah beams and screams for ecstatic joy. Lotte unlocks the cage, and dials the phone.

LOTTE
Maxine! Listen: It hasn't been me in John the last three times. Craig's had me locked up in the apartment. He made me call you at gunpoint. It's been him! Oh, God, it's been him!

MAXINE (O.S.)
(beat, calmly)
Really? Well, you know, he's quite good. I'm surprised. Anyway, I have a session with Malkovich I have to attend. I'll speak with you soon.

LOTTE
But Maxine, I thought it was me you loved.

MAXINE(O.S.)
I thought so too, doll. I guess we were mistaken. Bye-bye

Maxine hangs up. Lotte is visibly shaken.

CUT TO:

97 EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT 97

It's raining. Lotte wanders the streets, hugging herself. A lost soul.

CUT TO:

98 INT. MALKOVICH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 98

The doorbell rings. Malkovich answers it. Maxine stands there, dressed in an evening gown.

MALKOVICH
What the fuck do you want?

MAXINE
I can explain about the portal, darling.

MALKOVICH
Don't con me, Maxine. We're finished. I don't know who the hell you people are, but this insanity is now over.

MAXINE
Oh shut up.
(beat)
Craig, darling are you in there?

Malkovich tenses up, then he shakes his head in an awkward, puppet-like manner. When Malkovich speaks, it seems to be against his will.

MALKOVICH
(labored)
Yeah. How'd you know it was me?

MAXINE
Lotte called me.

MALKOVICH
Oh, so the bitch escaped.

MAXINE
Apparently you can control this Malkovich fellow now.

MALKOVICH
I'm getting better all the time.

98 CONTINUED: 98

MAXINE
I'll say you are. Let's do it on his kitchen table, then make him eat an omelette off of it.

MALKOVICH
(as Malkovich)
No... damn... you.
(as Craig)
Oh shut up, you overrated sack of shit.

Malkovich begins undressing, and does a lewd bump and grind while looking mortified. Maxine giggles. Malkovich (Craig) laughs wildly.

CUT TO:

99 EXT. LESTER'S MANSION - NIGHT 99

It's raining. Lotte, soaking wet with straggly hair, knocks on the door. After a moment, Lester answers. He doesn't recognize Lotte.

LESTER
Yes?

LOTTE
It's Lotte Schwartz, Dr. Lester. Craig's wife.

LESTER
Oh, yes! Oh, my God, you'll catch your death out here. Look at you. You're soaking wet. Please, come in.

LOTTE
Thank you, sir.

CUT TO:

100 INT. LIVING ROOM - A BIT LATER 100

Lotte, now in a white terrycloth robe, sits by the fireplace and sips tea.

LESTER
How's that?

LOTTE
Much better, thank you.

100 CONTINUED:

LESTER
Good. Now what brings you to my door on such an inhospitable night?

LOTTE
(beat)
Dr. Lester, I have an unhealthy obsession with John Malkovich.

LESTER
The performer?

LOTTE
Yes.

LESTER
I see. And what prompted you to come to me with this issue?

LOTTE
Well, when I was here for dinner with my husband, I happened upon a room which seemed to be a sort of John Malkovich museum and I thought perhaps you would have some appreciation of my state of mind. I just needed to talk.

LESTER
You look so lovely and fragile, my dear, sitting there in my oversized man's robe.

LOTTE
Thank you, Dr. Lester. Tell me, what is this strange power Malkovich exudes. You've got to help me understand. All I think about is wanting to be him.

LESTER
Wanting to what?

LOTTE
Wanting to be him. To be John Malkovich.

LESTER
I see.
(beat)
Perhaps you can.

LOTTE
What do you mean?

100 CONTINUED: (2) 100

LESTER
You can be Malkovich, my dear, if you like. For the rest of his life.

Lotte looks confused. Lester leans on the mantel and stares into the fire.

LOTTE
Dr. Lester, how --

LESTER
(waving her off)
I am not Dr. Lester, my dear. You see, there are seventeen of us who live in the being you know as Lester.
(turns to face Lotte, then says hello in seventeen different intonations, each time shaking Lotte's hand)
Hello. Hello. Good evening. Hello. Greetings. Bon Jour. Hello. Hi. Good Evening. Hello. Nice to meet you. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hello. Hiya.

LOTTE
I don't understand.

LESTER
Ninety years ago, one among us, a ship captain named Mertin, discovered a strange portal.
(second voice)
Is it ninety years ago already?
(first voice)
Yes, it is.
(second voice)
Hmmm, time flies.
(first voice)
Anyway, Mertin discovered that the portal was the entrance to a "vessel" body and that he could live forever, by leaping from vessel to vessel.

LOTTE
Dr. Lester is such a vessel?

LESTER
Yes. And Captain Mertin learned, through experimentation, that there were strict laws that applied to the vessel's use.
(third voice)
I'll say.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: (3) 100

LESTER (cont'd)
(first voice)
For example, one could not enter until the vessel fully ripened at age forty-four. Enter it before then and one would quite simply be spit out after a few minutes.

LOTTE
I see.

LESTER
But as he waited for the Lester vessel to mature, Captain Mertin realized that there were people he loved who he would be leaving behind. They would get old and die. This made him despondent, until he realized that he could share this vessel with as many friends and loved ones as he chose.
(another voice)
When the time came to enter Lester, there were seventeen of us.
(another voice)
And we have been living in perfect blissful harmony as one person ever since.

LOTTE
This is amazing.

LESTER
And now, as you can see, the usefulness of the Lester vessel is coming to an end. It is old and infirm. So we will move on.

LOTTE
To Malkovich.

LESTER
Yes. To our next vessel, John Horatio Malkovich.
(another voice)
Along the way, in this life, we've of course made new friends...

Lester takes Lotte's hand and leads her into the room next door.

CUT TO:

101 INT. SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 101

Lotte and Lester enter. A group of friendly looking old people sit around sipping tea.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: 101

LESTER
... and they will join us in our next incarnation.
(to the old people)
This is Lotte, everyone. She is our friend also.

OLD PERSON #1
Hello.

OLD PERSON #2
Good evening.

OLD PERSON #3
Hi ya doin'?

LOTTE
Hi.

Lester and the old people look at each other. Small nods of the head pass between them.

LESTER
We like you, Lotte. We can see you are a decent, kind woman. So we've decided to offer you a place in John Malkovich with us. If you like.

LOTTE
Forever?

LESTER
For the rest of his life. Then we'll all move on to the next vessel. It's a great adventure.

LOTTE
(beat)
Dr. Lester... Dr. *Lesters*, you're being so nice to me. So trusting. There's something I should tell you about the Malkovich vessel.

CUT TO:

102 INT. MALKOVICH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 102

Malkovich and Maxine lie naked on the bed, looking quite relaxed. Malkovich is different now. He's more casual and enthusiastic, less austere. He's more like Craig.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: 102

MAXINE
You still there, sweets?

MALKOVICH
Yeah. I figured out how to hold on long as I want. Oddly enough, it's all in the wrists.

MAXINE
(little girl pout)
Do a puppet show for me, Craig honey.

MALKOVICH
You mean with Malkovich?

MAXINE
I'd love to see your work.

MALKOVICH
(pleased)
Really? Yeah. Okay.

Malkovich leans over and kisses her, then gets up.

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
I'll do something I call "Craig's Dance of Despair and Disillusionment."

Malkovich performs the same dance that the Craig puppet did at the beginning of the film. It begins awkwardly, but becomes more assured and ultimately spectacular, complete with impossible somersaults and perspiring brow. He finishes by falling to his knees and weeping.

MAXINE
(moved)
That was incredible. You're brilliant!

MALKOVICH
You see, Maxine, it isn't just playing with dolls.

MAXINE
You're right, my darling, it's so much more. It's playing with people!

Malkovich kisses Maxine. She snuggles close to him.

MAXINE
Stay in him forever?

102 CONTINUED: (2) 102

MALKOVICH
(as Malkovich, screaming)
No!
(as Craig, calmly)
But how will we make a living, my love, if our clientele doesn't have access to our product?

MAXINE
Well, we'll have all the money in Malkovich's bank account, plus he still gets acting work occasionally.

MALKOVICH
(as Malkovich, breaking through)
No! Please!
(as Craig, to Malkovich)
Shut up, will you? We're trying to think here.
(to Maxine)
It is sort of like being a puppeteer. I like that about it.

MAXINE
No one would ever have to know it's not him.

MALKOVICH
(an idea)
And I could use his existing notoriety to launch my own puppeteering career!

MAXINE
Oh, Craiggy, that's brilliant!

CUT TO:

103 INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT 103

Maxine and Malkovich are filling the portal with cement. Suddenly Malkovich stops and runs to the office door screaming a bloodcurdling scream. He stops just as suddenly, begins to strangle himself.

MALKOVICH
(Craig to Malkovich)
Shut up!
(to Maxine)
Sorry, dear, I lost control for a minute.

103 CONTINUED:

MAXINE
(kissing him)
It's okay, my sweet.

They go back to filling the portal. There is a the sound of many shuffling feet in the hallway. The door flies open and the old people led by Lester and Lotte burst in. Malkovich and Maxine turn with a start.

LESTER
Aaaahhhh, the portal!

LOTTE
(to Malkovich)
You bastard!

Lotte lunges for Malkovich. Lester grabs her arm, holds her back.

LESTER
No! Don't harm the vessel!

LOTTE
It's Craig in there, I can tell.

LESTER
I understand, but we must protect the vessel at all costs.
(to Malkovich)
Please, Craig, please step aside and allow us to have what is rightfully ours.

MALKOVICH
Squatter's rights, Lester.

Malkovich laughs somewhat maniacally. Maxine slips her arm through Malkovich's, joins him in his laughter, and glances triumphantly over at Lotte.

MAXINE
Now excuse us, we have an entertainment legend to create. To re-create.

Maxine kisses Malkovich on the cheek.

LESTER
(to the cult members)
Clear the way for them, my friends. They will be dealt with in due time.

The old people grumble and let Malkovich and Maxine exit. They then converge on the sealed portal and begin clawing

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: (2) 103

desperately at the quick-drying cement. Fingers are scraped raw, and we see smears of blood and skin on the rough gray surface.

LOTTE
We could just all enter the portal and chase Craig out.

LESTER
He's too powerful, my dear. The fact that he's controlling the vessel before it's ripe proves that. If we entered now, while he's in it, his energy would probably jam us all into Malkovich's unconscious mind, which I'm guessing would not be a particularly pleasant place to be.

LOTTE
What do we do?

LESTER
We wait. Until Malkovich's forty-fourth birthday.

CUT TO:

104 INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY 104

A slick-looking agent answers a buzzing phone.

AGENT
Of course, send him right in. Don't ever keep him waiting again. Do you understand?

Malkovich and Maxine enter. The agent stands, holds out his hand.

AGENT (CONT'D)
John! Great to see you! Sorry about the cunt at reception.

MALKOVICH
This is my fiancee Maxine.

The agent shakes Maxine's hand.

AGENT
Great to see you, Maxine. Sorry about the cunt at reception. Please have a seat.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: 104

Malkovich and Maxine sit.

AGENT (CONT'D)
Can I get you anything? Coffee? Water?

MAXINE
No thanks.

AGENT
(into phone)
Teresa, get me a chicken soup.
(to Malkovich and Maxine)
Chicken soup?

Maxine and Malkovich shake their heads "no."

MALKOVICH
I'll get right to the point, Larry. I'm a puppeteer now...

AGENT
Okay. Great.

MALKOVICH
...and I want to redirect my career so that from now on the name John Malkovich will be synonymous with puppets.

AGENT
Sure, sure. No problemo. Poof, you're a puppeteer. Heh heh. Just let me make a couple of calls.

CUT TO:

105 C.U. OF MALKOVICH BEING INTERVIEWED AGAINST BLACK BACKGROUND 105

MALKOVICH
There's the truth and there are lies. Art always tell the truth.
(puckish grin)
Even when it's lying.

CUT TO:

106 TITLE: AMERICAN MASTERS PRESENTS 106

TITLE: JOHN HORATIO MALKOVICH: DANCE OF DESPAIR AND DISILLUSIONMENT

DISSOLVE TO:

107 SEQUENCE OF BLACK AND WHITE STILL PHOTOGRAPHS: EVANSTON, ILLINOIS IN THE 1950'S, PARENTS HOLDING A BABY, A YOUNG BOY ON A PONY. 107

NARRATOR (V.O.)
John Malkovich was born to Robert and Marion Malkovich in Evanston, Illinois on December 16, 1954.

CUT TO:

108 C.U. OF JOHNSON HEYWARD, 50, DISTINGUISHED, BEING INTERVIEWED. 108

CHYRON: JOHNSON HEYWARD, MALKOVICH BIOGRAPHER

HEYWARD
John was a quiet boy, forever lost in the world of make-believe. He loved dolls, which at the time, was viewed by his peers as effeminate. But now we can look back and see it was simply his life's work germinating.

CUT TO:

109 STILL PHOTOGRAPHS OF YOUNG ADULT MALKOVICH IN VARIOUS PROFESSIONS 109

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But it took Malkovich some years to discover what his life's work was. After graduating from Northwestern University with a degree in ethnomusicology, Malkovich floundered through a series of dead-end careers: salesman, laborer, film actor, typist, finally finding his calling in puppetry in 1997 and quickly becoming arguably the greatest puppeteer in the history of the world.

CUT TO:

110 C.U. OF DEREK MANTINI, LOOKING A BIT LIKE MAGICIAN DAVID COPPERFIELD 110

CHYRON: DEREK MANTINI, PUPPETEER

MANTINI
Malkovich is a fabulous technician. And he's certainly a worthy competitor for the title of greatest puppeteer in the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: 110

MANTINI (cont'd)
history of the world. I'm sure we'll work together some day soon. And I look forward to that collaboration.

CUT TO:

111 VIDEO OF MALKOVICH ON STAGE WORKING HIS CRAIG SCHWARTZ PUPPET 111
BEFORE RAPT BLACK-TIE AUDIENCE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Malkovich's fast and furious rise to fame brought about a renaissance in the art of puppeteering. He began teaching the now overflowing puppetry master class at New York's notorious Juilliard School.

CUT TO:

112 MALKOVICH, IN BLACK T-SHIRT, DIRECTING A GROUP OF 112
PUPPETEERING STUDENTS IN A WORKSHOP. ONE STUDENT STANDS ON STAGE WORKING A MARIONETTE. MALKOVICH DISTRACTEDLY CHEWS HIS FINGERNAIL AS HE WATCHES. FINALLY HE HOPS UP ONTO THE STAGE AND ANGRILY PULLS THE PUPPET FROM THE YOUNG MAN'S HANDS.

MALKOVICH
No. No. What are you doing? What? What?

STUDENT
I'm making him weep, John.

MALKOVICH
Well, that's your problem, isn't it? You're *making* him weep, but you *yourself* are not *weeping*. Don't ever fuck with your audience. Until the puppet is an extension of you, it's just a novelty act. It's Topo Gigio. Nothing more
(emphatically to other students)
Do you see what I'm saying?

The seated students nod appreciatively.

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
Here, watch this...

Malkovich takes the student's puppet and makes it weep. It's magnificent

CUT TO:

113 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT 113

An amazing place with twenty-foot ceilings and a panoramic view of New York. Outside it's snowing. Malkovich (Craig) lounges in silk pajamas, sipping champagne and watching the TV biography. He is enjoying it immensely. Next to him on an end table are framed wedding photos of Maxine and him.

MALKOVICH
(calling)
Honey, it's on! You're missing it!

CUT TO:

114 INT. NURSERY - NIGHT 114

Maxine is hanging some cute pictures of ducks on the wall. She is quite pregnant.

MAXINE
(muttering)
I'm busy.

MALKOVICH (O.S.)
It's really good! I look really fucking amazing. I'd fuck me!
(thinking, to himself)
Hey, maybe there's a way to do that.

Maxine wipes her sweaty brow, watches the snow out the window.

CUT TO:

115 NEWS FOOTAGE OF MALKOVICH SHAKING HANDS WITH THE PRESIDENT. 115

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Within months of launching his puppeteering career, John Malkovich found himself embraced by all elements of the American community

CUT TO:

116 SHOT OF MALKOVICH'S CRAIG PUPPET TAP DANCING ALONGSIDE SAVION 116
GLOVER.

CUT TO:

117 SHOT OF A SUBURBAN STREET. A GROUP OF CHILDREN TRICK OR TREATING. THREE IN THE GROUP ARE WEARING FULL OVER-THE-HEAD JOHN MALKOVICH MASKS. 117

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The John Malkovich mask was the most popular costume of this Halloween season. His now famous alter ego, the Craig Schwartz puppet coming in a close second.

CUT TO:

118 SHOT OF KID DRESSED LIKE CRAIG SCHWARTZ, DANCING LIKE A PUPPET AND WAVING AT THE CAMERA. 118

CUT TO:

119 SHOT OF MALKOVICH AND MAXINE ATTENDING SOME PREMIERE. 119

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But John Malkovich didn't make this transition from journeyman actor to star puppeteer alone. By his side throughout the entire process was his wife and manager Maxine Lund.

CUT TO:

120 C.U. OF JOHN HEYWARD BEING INTERVIEWED. 120

HEYWARD
Oh, Maxine is definitely the driving force behind Malkovich.

121 INT. LESTER'S MANSION - NIGHT 121

Lester, Lotte, and several old people watch the documentary.

HEYWARD
She's a human dynamo. She loved her husband so much, she was able to say, "Hey, take this chance. Do what you love. I will support you."

Lotte screams and throws a pillow at the TV set.

LESTER
(kissing her on the forehead)
Relax, my dear. Tonight's the night.
(MORE)

121 CONTINUED: 121

LESTER (cont'd)
Forty-fourth birthday. Soon all your frustrations will be over.

CUT TO:

122 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT 122

Malkovich watches the documentary. It's coming to a close.

NARRATOR
And what does the future hold for John Horatio Malkovich? Well, to quote the bard, he's got the world on a string.

MUSIC: "WORLD ON A STRING" SUNG BY FRANK SINATRA

Malkovich clicks off the TV.

MALKOVICH
Max, it's over! I gotta head down to ABT. Doing that Swan Lake benefit tonight! We'll celebrate Malkovich's birthday when I get home! Okay?

There is no response. Malkovich sighs, gets up.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. LINCOLN CENTER - NIGHT 123

CUT TO:

124 INT. MET OPERA AUDITORIUM - NIGHT 124

The house is packed with a black-tie crowd. A life-size version of the Craig puppet performs Swan Lake with the corps of the American Ballet Theater. It is quite lovely. A ballerina leaps into the puppet's arms. Amazingly it catches her. The audience erupts with cries of "bravo."

CUT TO:

125 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATER 125

Malkovich whistles as he walks down the hall carrying his Craig puppet in what looks like a bass violin case, except shaped like a man. He hears the phone ringing in his apartment. He fiddles with the lock and opens his front door.

CUT TO:

126 INT. PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 126

Malkovich studies the room, trying to understand. Glass and debris all over the floor. Snow blows in through the broken window. The wind howls. The phone rings. Malkovich grabs it.

MALKOVICH
(urgently)
Yes? Hello?

VOICE
We have your wife.

MALKOVICH
Oh my God. Listen, don't hurt her. However much you want...

VOICE
No, you listen, asshole. I don't want money. What I want is for you to leave John Malkovich. *Now*.

MALKOVICH
(beat)
Who is this? Lester?

VOICE
Does it matter? We are going to kill Maxine if you do not leave the body immediately.

Malkovich paces.

MALKOVICH
Think about it, Lester, if I leave Malkovich, I'm Craig Schwartz again. I have no career, no money. And Maxine would no longer have anything to do with me anyway. So, really, what's my incentive?

VOICE
Jesus, we're going to kill your wife, you fucking lunatic!

MALKOVICH
(beat)
Look, do what you need to do. I can't leave.

126 CONTINUED: 126

Malkovich hangs up. He stares at the phone.

CUT TO:

127 INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 127

Lester listens to a dial tone. Old people and Lotte huddle around.

LESTER
Craig called our bluff.

LOTTE
Shit.

Lotte glances through the cracked door at Maxine sitting on the floor in the file room.

LOTTE (CONT'D)
I guess it's no longer a bluff.

LESTER
I didn't expect to have to kill anyone. That's not my style.

LOTTE
(beat)
Look, I'll do it. I owe her one anyway.

Lotte opens a desk drawer.

CUT TO:

128 INT. FILE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 128

Maxine has heard that Lotte is about to kill her. She scans the room for a way out. There is none. Except the portal. She crawls toward it.

CUT TO:

129 INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 129

Lotte pulls a pistol from the desk drawer, kisses Lester on the lips, and heads into the file room.

CUT TO:

130 INT. FILE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 130

Lotte enters. Maxine is halfway in the portal. The door slams shut.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED: 130

LOTTE
Fuck!

Lotte runs to the portal, climbs in. The door slams shut behind her.

CUT TO:

131 INT. PORTAL - CONTINUOUS 131

Maxine, heaves as she crawls through the slime. Lotte is behind her.

LOTTE
You're not getting away, Maxine.

MAXINE
Lotte, please, you don't under...

A sucking sound. The two get pulled forward. A flash of light.

CUT TO:

132 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING 132

It's a 1950's room and has the washed out quality of an old color photograph. In bed having sweaty, violent sex are John Malkovich's thirty year old parents (we saw a photo of them in the American Masters documentary). John Malkovich as a little boy stands in the doorway watching unobserved. He clutches a baby doll to his chest and looks scared and confused. Suddenly Lotte and Maxine pop into the room. Unlike their surroundings, they appear in full, saturated color. They both look around. Malkovich and his parents are unaware of them.

MAXINE
Where the hell am I?

LOTTE
Malkovich's unconscious. Looks like the primal scene to me.

Lotte lifts the pistol and trains it on Maxine. Suddenly, Mrs. Malkovich notices John in the doorway. She gasps, pushes her husband off of her, pulls the sheet to her chest. Mr. Malkovich turns over to see what's going on. Lotte is distracted by the scene.

MALKOVICH AS A LITTLE BOY
Daddy, why are you hurting mommy?

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

MRS. MALKOVICH
Daddy's not hurting me, Johnny. We were just playing.

MALKOVICH AS A LITTLE BOY
Can I play, too?

Mr. and Mrs. Malkovich hesitate, not knowing how to respond. Maxine dives out the window. Lotte snaps back into focus and dives after her.

CUT TO:

133 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT 133

Maxine runs past a teenage Malkovich, in a tuxedo, feeling up a bored girl against a locker. In the background we hear a rock band playing. It's prom night

GIRL
Is that supposed to, like, feel good?

Lotte runs down the hall after Maxine.

CUT TO:

134 INT. MALKOVICH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 134

Malkovich is sitting on the couch crying with his face in his hands. A woman, seen from behind, heads to the door with a suitcase. She opens the door.

MALKOVICH
(quietly, shaky)
Please don't go. I'll change.

As the woman hesitates at the open door, Maxine limps in, panicky and looking behind her. Lotte follows. The woman, unaware of Maxine and Lotte, exits and closes the door. Maxine, scans the room, spots an open window. She heads to it, dives through.

CUT TO:

135 INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY 135

Maxine lands, runs past as young John Malkovich is being lifted by his mother to face a dead old lady in an open casket.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: 135

MRS. MALKOVICH
C'mon, sweetheart, kiss grandma good-bye. You don't want her to think you don't love her anymore, do you?

Young John looks scared and repulsed. Lotte appears, shoots at Maxine, misses. Maxine runs past the mourners and out of the chapel.

CUT TO:

136 INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY 136

Young John Malkovich sits crying by himself in the back of the bus as the other kids taunt him.

KIDS
(chanting)
Little Johnny Malk-o-pee / wet his pants so all could see...

Maxine appears in the aisle, gets her bearings, starts to run. Lotte appears behind her, leaps and tackles Maxine. The two wrestle on the floor for possession of the gun.

KIDS (CONT'D)
...no one smells as much as he / Little Johnny Malkopee...

Maxine and Lotte have rolled down the front steps of the bus. Maxine is halfway out the door. Her head is dangerously close to the street speeding by below. Both tumble out the door.

CUT TO:

137 EXT. DITCH - NIGHT 137

Maxine and Lotte fall together into the ditch. It's pouring rain. The gun flies from Lotte's hand as she hits the ground. Maxine scrambles for it, gets it, stands and points it at Lotte. The two watch each other, wild-eyed and panting. After a bit, Lotte speaks.

LOTTE
I loved you so much. Why did you have to hurt me like that?

Maxine looks long and hard at Lotte.

MAXINE
I'm sorry, Lotte. I was wrong. I'm truly sorry.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED: 137

LOTTE
I loved you! I loved you! Damn you!

MAXINE
(beat)
I guess I loved you too. In my way.

LOTTE
You have one fucked up way of showing it.

MAXINE
I know.
(beat, looks up at the sky, then back down at Lotte)
It's your baby, okay? Okay?!

LOTTE
What?

MAXINE
The baby. It's yours. It's ours. I got pregnant when you were in Malkovich.

LOTTE
Don't fuck with me, Maxine.

MAXINE
It's true, damn it! Look... remember the time the condom broke?

Lotte does. She remains silent.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
I kept it because I knew you were the father... the other mother... whatever. Because it was yours.

LOTTE
(beat, intoxicated)
We're parents? Together?
(gulping)
Oh.

They look at each other.

CUT TO:

138 INT. BAR - NIGHT 138

It's a dive. Malkovich (Craig) sits there drinking heavily. He's a weepy mess. Another drunk guy staggers up to him.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED: 138

DRUNK
Say, aren't you John Malpisich?

MALKOVICH
(beat)
No.

DRUNK
You are! You are! You can't fool me!
(to others, pointing)
John Malpisich! John Malpisich!

MALKOVICH
No, I'm not. I am not John Malpisich.
Fuck you, fuck you! Fuck you all!

Malkovich lunges at the drunk, and the two wrestle on the floor. A crowd of drunks gathers around them and starts chanting.

DRUNKS
Malkovich! Malkovich! Malkovich!
Malkovich!...

Malkovich finishes off the drunk. He gets up, sweating and disheveled. The circle of drunks widens.

MALKOVICH
I am not Mallovich.

He walks off determinedly toward the back of the bar.

CUT TO:

139 INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 139

Lester's holds a phone to his ear.

LESTER
Yes?

MALKOVICH (V.O.)
Don't do it! For the love of God, please don't kill Maxine!

LESTER
So you'll leave?

MALKOVICH (V.O.)
Yes. I'll leave.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED: 139

LESTER
All right then. Do it now over the phone so I can hear, and your lovely bride walks.

CUT TO:

140 INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS 140

Malkovich is on a pay phone.

MALKOVICH
Okay. I'm going.

Malkovich's face strains. He slumps over, then regains consciousness. He is Malkovich again.

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
I'm free! I'm free!

CUT TO:

141 INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 141

Lester, holding the phone, yells to the other old people.

LESTER
Now, my friends! The time is now!

The old people hurry into the file room. Lester pauses for a moment.

LESTER (CONT'D)
Where's Lotte?

He looks around, but can't wait, and follows the other old people.

CUT TO:

142 INT. BAR - NIGHT 142

Malkovich heads to the door, still drunk, but now himself again.

MALKOVICH
I'm free! I'm back! I'm Malko...

Malkovich's body jerks crazily around, like he's being riddled with bullets, as the cult members enter him. The drunks at the bar watch.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED: 142

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
(sounding like Lester)
...We're Malkovich. At last.

CUT TO:

143 EXT. NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE - NIGHT 143

A soaking wet, anxious Craig lies in the ditch, disoriented. He raises his head, peers around, and sees Lotte and Maxine hitching together by the side of the road. A look of confusion passes over his face: What are they doing here? What are they doing here together? It's probably not good, but he's going to make the best of it. He hurries over to them.

CRAIG
Max! Lotte!

He tries to embrace Maxine. She pushes him away. He looks hurt. He turns to Lotte.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Lotte, long time! You look great!

He tries to kiss Lotte on the cheek. She moves her head. He turns back to Maxine.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
Maxine, I just left Malkovich for you. I said to myself, it's not worth being in Malkovich without you, so I...

A car has stopped. Lotte opens the door. She & Maxine get in.

MAXINE
(to driver)
He's not with us.

The door closes and the car pulls away. Craig is left alone in the rain.

CRAIG
(screaming)
I did the right thing! Damn it!

CUT TO:

144 INT. CAR - NIGHT 144

Maxine and Lotte sit together in the back seat. A couple of Jersey guys heading into the city for a night of drinking are

(CONTINUED)

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in the front. The music is loud. Maxine takes Lotte's hand. Lotte smiles.

LOTTE
What should we name her?

MAXINE
How dreary - to be - Somebody / How public - like a frog / To tell one's name - the livelong June / To an admiring Bog!

LOTTE
That's Emily Dickinson, isn't it?

MAXINE
(pleased)
Yeah. It is.
(kisses Lotte)
Let's call her Emily.

LOTTE
Let's!

CUT TO:

145 EXT. BAR - NIGHT 145

Malkovich exits the bar. He is cool now, regal. The streets are empty and quiet and wet with rain. Malkovich disappears, in extreme slow motion, down the street and into the night.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

146 INT. RURAL KITCHEN - DAY 146

It's a lovely, homey room. Maxine and Lotte, a bit older, sit eating lunch at the table with their daughter Emily, 7.

MAXINE
You want some more milk, honey?

EMILY
(to Maxine)
No, thanks, mom.

LOTTE
More tuna salad?

EMILY
No, thanks, mom.

146 CONTINUED:

They eat in silence for a bit.

LOTTE
(to Maxine)
Y'know, it's weird, I had a dream about Craig last night.

MAXINE
You're kidding. Blast from the past.

LOTTE
Yeah. Really.

EMILY
(to Lotte)
Who's Craig, Mom?

Lotte and Maxine exchange looks.

LOTTE
Um, he's a man your mom and I were both married to once, Em.

EMILY
Really? You guys were married to a man? Yech.

LOTTE
Before you were born, honey. Before your mom and I knew each other.

MAXINE
Well, am I the only one around here who wants to go swimming?

EMILY
(jumping up)
Yay! I do!

LOTTE
Yay! Me too!

MAXINE
Good!

EMILY
Can Jenny come?

LOTTE
If her moms say it's okay.

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EMILY
Yay!

All three cheerily get up and head toward the door.

CUT TO:

147 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY 147

Craig, now in a dirty and torn, rubber John Malkovich mask stands outside a movie theater featuring a marquee that reads: John Malkovich is "The Jewel Thief." There's a long line of people waiting to get in, and Craig, surrounded by densely hand-worded, Bible-quoting posterboard signs, and carelessly dangling many little tormented-looking marionettes before him, preaches to the moviegoers in a screaming street-person rant.

CRAIG
Beware me! I am the Tormentor of souls, Old Scratch, Old Horny, Old Bendy, Old Ned! I have been among you since before time. I want your soul and to get it, I will seduce you with promises of eternal life. Now, in this age, you know me as John Malkovich. But I have been known before as Dr. Lester, as Captain Mertin, as George Washington Carver. The list goes on. These are simply the earthly vessels I utilize to collect souls. When these vessels are old and worthless, I toss them away and enter the next vessel. Beware me! Live for God! If you do not, I will enslave you forever in my loins! You will suffer eternal tongues of flame, you will --

A passer-by drops a quarter in Craig's change cup.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
(cheerfully)
Thank you, sir.
(back to business)
You will suffer scorpions eating your eyeballs! You will suffer oceans of feces, you will...

CUT TO:

148 EXT. LESTER'S MANSION - DAY 148

Kevin Bacon, visibly older, almost bald now, with a fringe of hair around the sides of his head, knocks on the door. After a moment, the door opens and we see Malkovich, also visibly older, but with a toupee of lush hair.

MALKOVICH
B.L.T.!

KEVIN BACON
Malkshake!

The two embrace. Kevin Bacon enters, Malkovich entwines his arm through Kevin Bacon's and the two walk down the hall.

MALKOVICH (CONT'D)
So how's Kyra?

KEVIN BACON
Good, good. She's sorry she couldn't make it today, but she had rehearsal.

MALKOVICH
That's fine. I wanted to talk to you both, but we'll just talk. Okay?

KEVIN BACON
Cool. Great.

Kevin Bacon and Malkovich approach Floris from behind. She is in a kimono and watering plants. Malkovich kisses her on the back of the neck as he passes. She giggles, shoos him away playfully, turns and sees Kevin Bacon.

FLORIS
Kevin! I didn't even hear the door!

She pecks him on the cheek.

KEVIN BACON
Lookin' great, Flor.

FLORIS
I'm looking grateful?

Kevin Bacon and Malkovich laugh appreciatively and move on down the hall. Floris looks confused.

MALKOVICH
(beat)
Kev, I feel like you and me and Floris
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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MALKOVICH (cont'd)
and Kyra have become so close over the last several years.

KEVIN BACON
We feel the same way, buddy. Amigos.

MALKOVICH
And we don't want to lose you guys.

KEVIN BACON
What are you talking about? You're not going to lose us.

MALKOVICH
Eventually we will.

They enter the kitchen.

CUT TO:

149 INT. LESTER'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 149

Kevin Bacon and Malkovich sit in the breakfast nook. It's bright and cheerful. Malkovich pours two cups of coffee.

MALKOVICH
Look at us, we're not getting any younger.

KEVIN BACON
Don't rub it in.

MALKOVICH
Listen, Kev, this is gonna sound crazy, but I found this way for us to live forever. All of us.

KEVIN BACON
What are you talking about, Johnny-boy?

MALKOVICH
All of us. You, me, Floris, Kyra, Gary Sinise, maybe.

KEVIN BACON
I don't understand.

MALKOVICH
Kev, This is Emily.

Malkovich places a photo album on the table and opens it. On the first page is a long-lens surveillance photo of Emily, Maxine, and Lotte happily getting into a car at a supermarket

(CONTINUED)

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parking lot. Kevin Bacon looks at the photo curiously and flips through the album. It's got page after page of surveillance photos of Emily. Kevin Bacon looks up at Malkovich, confused and freaked out.

CUT TO:

150 EXT. COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL - DAY 150

It's a beautiful, sunny day. Maxine and Lotte sit chatting, poolside. Kids scream and play in and out of the pool. Emily stands at the edge of the pool shouting gleefully at her parents.

EMILY
Mom! Mom! Mom! Mom! Look at me! Watch! Watch! Watch this!

Maxine and Lotte turn their attention to Emily. She yells and jumps, cannonball-style into the pool, making a big splash. We follow her underwater as she swims through water-filtered sunlight and the legs of other playing children.

FADE OUT.

THE END